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Oakland

A DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR OAKLAND

PROPOSALS FROM THE 701 URBAN DESIGN STUDY

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL
STUDIES

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A report to the 701 Program of the City of Oakland prepared under the supervision of DeMars and Wells and Jack T. Sidener, Urban Design Consultants, with staff from the 701 Division of the Oakland City Planning Department.

Oakland, California
June 1969
Report No. OCPD 197

Introduction And Highlights

This is a report on Oakland's physical form—its shortcomings, its potential, and its future. It is the second of two reports produced in a study of Oakland's physical environment by the Oakland 701 Project's Urban Design Team.

This urban design effort formed only one phase of the overall 701 Project, an extensive city-wide study aimed at the formulation of a comprehensive development plan for Oakland.¹ Other major phases have explored ways to reduce hard-core unemployment in the city, encourage economic development, and provide adequate housing for Oakland's residents.

The Urban Design Team included staff from the City Planning Department, working under the direction of DeMars and Wells and Jack T. Sidener, Urban Design Consultants.² During the course of the study, the team's basic conclusions and proposals were reviewed by and discussed with the Oakland Urban Design Committee, a group of design professionals, public officials, and other interested persons formed to advise the 701 Project in its environmental studies.

Oakland is currently undergoing extensive and dramatic change. It has a tremendous growth potential, but this growth must be balanced. Adequate land must be provided for all the differ-

ent activities, and each activity must be located properly relative to the others. Further, the healthy development of any area—and the quality of life there—rests largely on the presence of open space and other amenities and upon the area's general visual quality.

As David A. Crane, noted urban designer, has stated, "... the quality of design must be treated as a general utility, not as [a luxury]..." Everywhere, public concern is growing for the quality of the physical environment. This is true in Oakland as well.

The first report produced as a result of the urban design study, **Oakland's Form and Appearance**,³ discussed Oakland's existing cityscape, and explained the city-wide Urban Design Survey during which design professionals "looked" at the city and recorded their visual impressions of it.

Analysis suggested that much of the city's physical environment is shabby or dull, and that, despite a fascinating topography, the man-made city has little "feeling of place." There is, for example, little clear relationship between the circulation system and places of importance (office clusters, shopping centers, etc.).

Oakland's design opportunity lies in this lack of coalescence. The city's form is in flux. Oakland is certainly dynamic, and will be more so as rapid

transit, new freeways, and urban renewal become operative.

This report consists of a series of proposals intended to creatively direct the inevitable changes so as to improve the city's visual quality, achieve a more efficient and harmonious land-use pattern, promote clearer articulation of the city's form, and encourage a more sensitive integration among activities, man-made facilities, and the natural setting.

A wide range of devices are available for helping to carry out these proposals. There are possibilities urban renewal might broaden its scope to become a more flexible, comprehensive, continuing effort enabling widely scattered improvements across wide areas. The City's new "resource allocation program" (RAP)—just getting underway—will provide a powerful tool for balancing resources against needs, determining priorities, and scheduling capital improvements. Many innovations were included in the new Zoning Regulations adopted in 1965. Appropriate rezonings based on this code will be a very important means of channeling private development into appropriate areas. Another new control affecting private development is the proposed Real Estate Division Regulations drafted by the 701 Project to replace the city's present obsolete subdivision ordinance.

1. For an overall report on 701, see Oakland City Planning Department, **Options for Oakland: A Summary Report on the Oakland 701 Project**, August 1969.

2. The present report consists of the joint conclusions of this team, rather than an expression of the City Planning Department's position.

3. 701 Urban Design Team, October 1968.

HIGHLIGHT PROPOSALS

1

Intensification and Enhancement of Greater Central District

2

Hierarchy of Centers (Only "Subregional Centers" Shown)

3

Creek Development and Conservation

4

Shoreline Parks, Recreation, and Apartments

Massive Residential Area Tree Planting and Provision of Local Open Space

Hierarchy of Streets (Only "Boulevards" Shown), With Appropriate Design Improvements



URBAN DESIGN

The term "urban design" has been used by planners and design professionals in many ways. Some have used it as a catchall phrase to describe nearly all efforts of the design professions to understand and solve the physical problems of the city—from small beautification projects to regional plans. Some have drawn analogies to the way an architect solves the problems of designing a building. Many practitioners are anxious to point out ways in which urban design is distinct from other endeavors.

This study has been undertaken, however, on the basis that urban design cannot be separate, one-level design. To be meaningful, the efforts of urban designers must be an integral part of the whole planning process, from the initial designing of surveys to the preparation of long-range plans to consideration of actual building proposals, and all the way from the city-wide scale to the small-project scale.

Briefly, the function of urban design is to mold a city's physical form creatively, through a continuing process, into a more efficient, more structured, more beautiful, and more dramatic urban environment.

It is based on the thesis that the City has the responsibility to see that all streets and other public facilities—in addition to their being individually well designed—form in the aggregate a logical, visible framework which organizes and stimulates private development.

It is hoped that, through "urban design" as part of the continuing planning process, changes will be directed

toward creating an Oakland which is enjoyable to live and work in, which is well formed and distinctive, and which has easily identified shapes, colors, or arrangements—or is what city planners would call "imageable."

HIGHLIGHTS

These are some highlights of this report's proposals.

The Greater Central District should be intensified and structured—what is currently called the "Central District" plus the areas on all sides of Lake Merritt and most of the areas northward to the MacArthur Freeway.

A clear hierarchical structure of intensive "subregional," "community," and "neighborhood" commercial centers is proposed.

The creek system should be capitalized on as a positive element of the physical environment. Creeks would form the connecting links in corridors of open space, community facilities, and creekside apartments.

Several large sections of the city's wateredge should be used for shoreline parks, recreation, and apartments.

A massive program of street-tree planting, and provision of local parks and open space, should be carried out in environmentally-deficient neighborhoods.

A clear hierarchy of city streets, with visual standards for each, should be established, and extensive planting and design improvements undertaken along strategic routes. Higher-density apartments should locate in corridors along important trafficways.

Oakland's land-use pattern generally follows the topography in a series of strips parallel to the shoreline. Industry and transportation terminals claim almost the entire waterfront. Next, on the industrial belt's inland side, is a long residential stretch—largely old, deteriorating houses—followed by downtown and the San Pablo Avenue-East 14th Street commercial strip. Above this line residential areas—interrupted here and there by smaller commercial strips and clusters and (in the Hills) by remaining vacant land—extend up to the ridgeline where a long band of regional parkland and institutions forms the city's northeasterly edge. Except for the high-quality, high-density Lake Merritt area, the quality of housing generally improves, and its age and density decrease, as elevation and distance from the shore increase. Across this pattern freeways and railroads have imposed strong barriers, isolating neighborhoods and separating the city's residents from their waterfront.

Except for this basic strip pattern, though, man-made Oakland generally lacks clear form. It is still a sprawling, low-density city with centers that fail to look like centers and diffuse neighborhoods without strong physical identity.

However, the coming rapid-transit system, new freeways, and other factors are creating enormous opportunities for restructuring and improving the physical environment. General population growth and rising incomes—reflected already in the new high-rise apartments

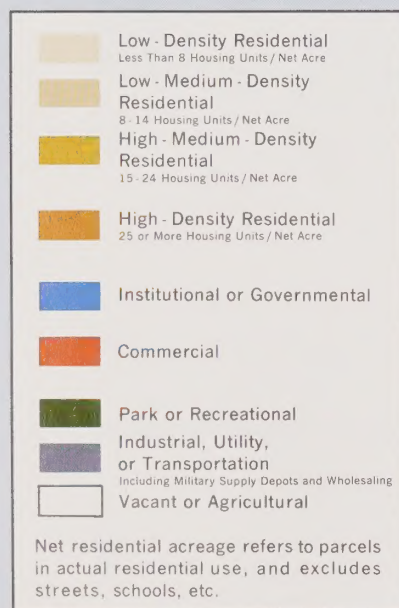
around Lake Merritt—will make it more and more feasible to create environmental variety and stronger form.

Oakland has a magnificent natural setting of hills, Bay, and wooded creeks, but all these are gradually succumbing to the corrosive effects of urbanization. The hills have been scarred in places by ugly quarries and brutally graded subdivisions. Along the shoreline tidal marshes and open water have been replaced over the years by thousands of acres of fill. Many fine stretches of wooded creek still flow, but these are neglected and scheduled for culverting or massive reshaping for flood-control purposes.

Paralleling the erosion of the natural setting is an erosion of interesting made-made forms. Architecturally fine older buildings are continually being demolished or tastelessly remodeled. Compact old business districts are continually being disrupted by random parking lots and gas stations.

The majority of Oakland's residential areas are dreary and uneventful expanses of detached clapboard or stucco houses. Within any given section, most of the lots and buildings are usually about the same size and height. This results in a monotonous, uneventful texture with little local contrast. There is a severe lack of environmental choice: there are almost no town houses or true garden apartments, or planned housing clusters with generous car-free spaces. In recent years hundreds of poorly designed, visually depressing apartment buildings have sprouted in the flatter residential areas.

LAND USE, 1969



The majority of residential streets below the MacArthur Freeway are drab and overly wide, and have few trees.

Many neighborhoods have large amounts of housing in deteriorating or dilapidated condition. Many residential streets are seriously impaired by nearby industrial and commercial uses. Nearly everywhere, ugly overhead utility poles and wires mar the skyline. High transmission lines slice across several neighborhoods. Noise from freeway traffic, airports, and other sources is very evident in much of Oakland.

Despite all these drawbacks, there are many fine opportunities for new residential development—for apartments in a wide variety of locations and for single-family houses in the big vacant sections of the Hills.

Most of the commercial and industrial environment is visually chaotic and lacking in amenities, and much of it is visibly declining, derelict, or obsolescent.

In spite of this, there are major opportunities for new commercial and industrial development in a variety of locations. There are also possibilities

for a research and conference center at Peralta Oaks, and for a medical training center next to Pill Hill.

Vast sections of Oakland are severely lacking in open space. Yet the creeks offer an enormous potential for conservation of their natural quality, and for development of linear parks or clusters of creekside garden apartments. The shoreline has a splendid potential for parks and marinas. Other park opportunities are offered by needed school expansions and new schools (see page 40) and by underused or surplus land such as that under the Grove-Shafter/MacArthur Freeway interchange.

Of Oakland's major streets—by which most people see most of the city—many are unsightly in the extreme, and the great majority are dreary and uneventful. However, many opportunities to improve the travel experience—by massive planting and special design treatment—are offered by needed street widenings and new trafficways, and by certain existing streets with unusual width, cross-section, or location.

OBSERVED MAJOR PROBLEMS



- Deteriorating Housing
- Unsightly New Apartments
- Deteriorating Commercial Area
- Scrap Yard or Derelict Industrial
- Severe Lack of Open Spaces
- Unsightly Streets
- Barrier
- Noise
- Power Line
- Quarry or Excessive Grading

0 1/2 1 1 1/2 2 Miles

SAN LEANDRO

OBSERVED MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES



Five factors contribute most significantly to Oakland's overall form:

1. residential densities;
2. the commercial pattern;
3. industry and the shoreline;
4. the open-space pattern;
5. the major circulation system.

Broad alternative policies for each of these factors are hypothesized below, and their implications analyzed.

RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

Alternative A: The Concentric-Circle Pattern. This traditional pattern of highest density near the Central District Core would extend with rings of decreasing density out to the edge of the city. The current Oakland General Plan is based on this concept. The policy takes advantage of Core accessibility, but rejects high-density development in other locations. Its pattern would not provide environmental variety **within** broad sections of the city.

Alternative B: Access and Amenity Corridors. Under this alternative the highest density would still be near the Core, but there would also be an emphasis on other clusters and corridors of high density related to major transportation routes, open spaces, and creeks and other topographic amenities. Densities would decrease as distance from these corridors increases, but there would be a wider choice of densities and housing types in all parts of the city, including the Hills.

Alternative C: Unstructured. Under this alternative, density increases would occur wherever the current market dictated, reflecting permissive zoning controls. The resultant dispersed pattern would offer a very wide range of sites for development, but would lead to a gradual homogenization of neighborhood character.

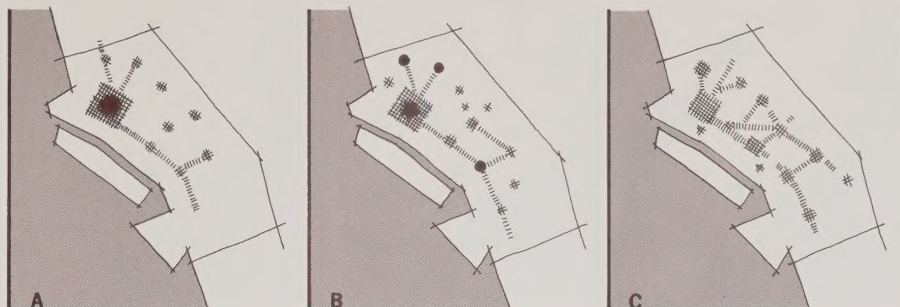
THE COMMERCIAL PATTERN

Alternative A: Sole Emphasis on Central District. Shopping and commercial employment would be concentrated in the Central District, with only moderate-sized functions allowed in the rest of the city. The current General Plan is based on this policy. It assumes that the successful functioning of the Central District requires discouraging major commercial growth in other parts of the city. Discouraging "competition" with the Central District, this policy rejects possibilities for major growth which might want unique or specialized non-Central District locations, or cheaper land. It also would work against the development of lively focal points in outlying districts.

Alternative B: Central District Plus Other Major and Specialized Areas. Although the Central District would still be emphasized as the dominant center,

RESIDENTIAL-DENSITY ALTERNATIVES





COMMERCIAL-PATTERN ALTERNATIVES

three or four other **designated** major clusters, or "subregional centers," would also be encouraged. The functions at these centers would be planned and controlled so as to complement, rather than weaken, the Central District's functions. In smaller commercial centers and strips, a much clearer differentiation of functions and scale than exists today would be encouraged.

Alternative C: Unstructured. This alternative would allow unplanned changes in the commercial pattern, with the location and scale of centers depending solely on market factors. Unforeseeable changes in shopping and traffic patterns could result, as well as a continued lack of specialization among commercial districts and a possible decline in the importance of the Central District.

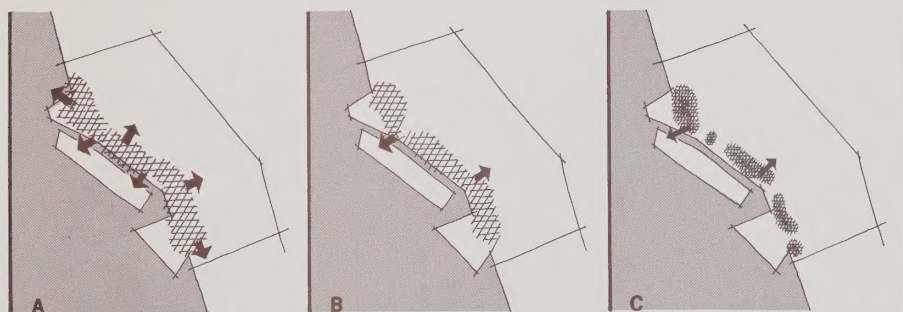
INDUSTRY AND THE SHORELINE

Alternative A: Major Expansion of the Industrial Belt. This alternative would emphasize major horizontal expansion of the industrial belt—both inland (replacing adjacent old neighborhoods with factories and warehouses) and into the Bay (through extensive fill). Uncontrolled expansion might leave little room for shoreline recreation.

Alternative B: Containment of the Industrial Belt. Under this policy, there would be only minor horizontal expansion of the industrial belt, and little effort to intensify use of existing industrial areas.

Alternative C: Intensification of the Industrial Belt. Under this alternative, some modest horizontal expansion could be provided for but the emphasis would be on making more intensive use of vacant, derelict, and underused lands **within** the industrial belt. Obsolete factories and docks would be replaced by modern facilities.

INDUSTRY-AND-SHORELINE ALTERNATIVES



THE OPEN-SPACE PATTERN

Alternative A: Large Parks in the Hills.

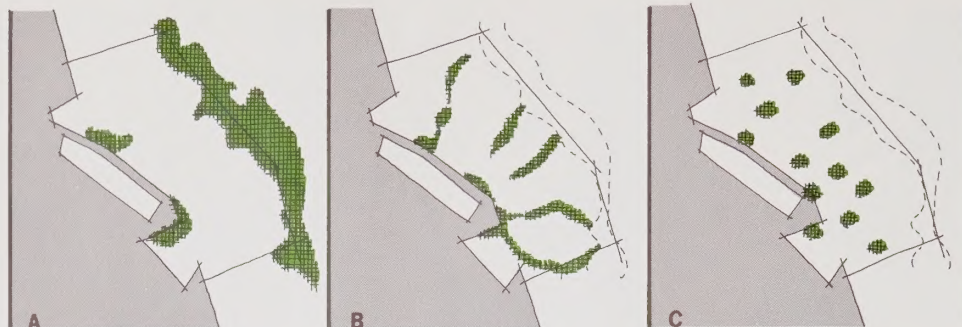
This alternative—really a continuation of the present pattern—would place the emphasis on extensive parks in the Hills, and on a few large open-space opportunities in the flatter areas. With major expansion only in big, region-serving parks, the policy still would leave unmet the need for small neighborhood parks in the densely populated flatlands.

Alternative B: Large Parks in the Flatlands.

This would emphasize creating large parks in the flats and lower hills, primarily in the form of continuous linear open spaces along existing but neglected topographic resources such as creeks and the shoreline.

Alternative C: Small Parks in the Flatlands.

Emphasis would be on a wide distribution of many small neighborhood and community parks in the flats and lower hills. In built-up areas, these parks would require acquisition and clearance of developed land.



OPEN-SPACE-PATTERN ALTERNATIVES

THE MAJOR CIRCULATION SYSTEM

Alternative A: Continuation of Present Pattern.

Under this alternative only limited trafficway improvements would be made, wherever unusual congestion occurred. Many bottlenecks and confusing intersections would remain. Visually, the overall trafficway pattern would remain essentially undifferentiated except for freeways.

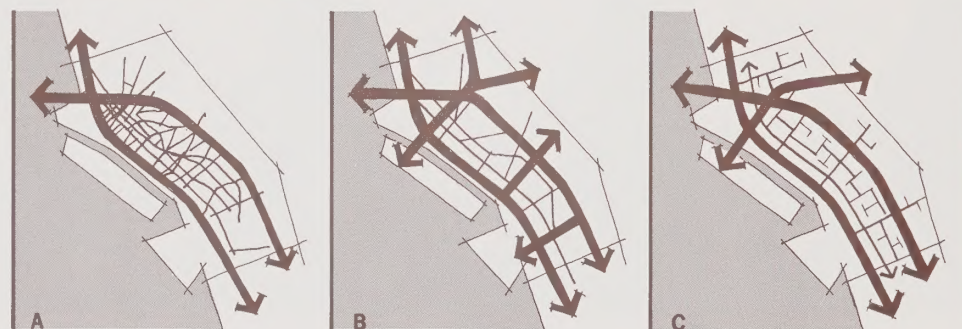
Alternative B: Freeway Emphasis.

New freeway construction would be strongly emphasized, with many of the city's streets serving mainly as connectors between freeways. Car movement would dominate, and no special effort would be made to encourage bus or rapid-transit patronage.

Alternative C: Balanced, Hierarchical System.

Under this alternative a hierarchical, clearly differentiated sys-

MAJOR-CIRCULATION ALTERNATIVES



tem of several trafficway levels would be developed. Freeway expansion would be limited, and a secondary (currently nonexistent) level of expressways would be encouraged. Each trafficway level would have its own identifiable form, and be connected to the next higher and lower levels in a recognizable pattern. In addition, the use of public transportation would be strongly encouraged.

PROPOSED CHOICES

After considering the above alternatives, it is proposed that the following choice be made for each factor. The alternative selected in each case takes best advantage of Oakland's unique opportunities. At the same time these recommendations are mutually supporting, and would add up to an efficient, clear structure for the city.

Factor	Recommended Alternative
Residential densities	Access and amenity corridors (B)
Commercial pattern	Central District plus other major and specialized areas (B)
Industry and the shoreline	Intensification of industrial belt (C)
Open-space pattern	Emphasis on expansion in the flats and lower hills—both in the form of small neighborhood and community spaces (related as much as possible to topographic opportunities) and in that of major parks along selected creeks and shoreline sections (combination of B and C)
Major circulation system	Balanced, hierarchical system (C)

BASIC CONCEPTS

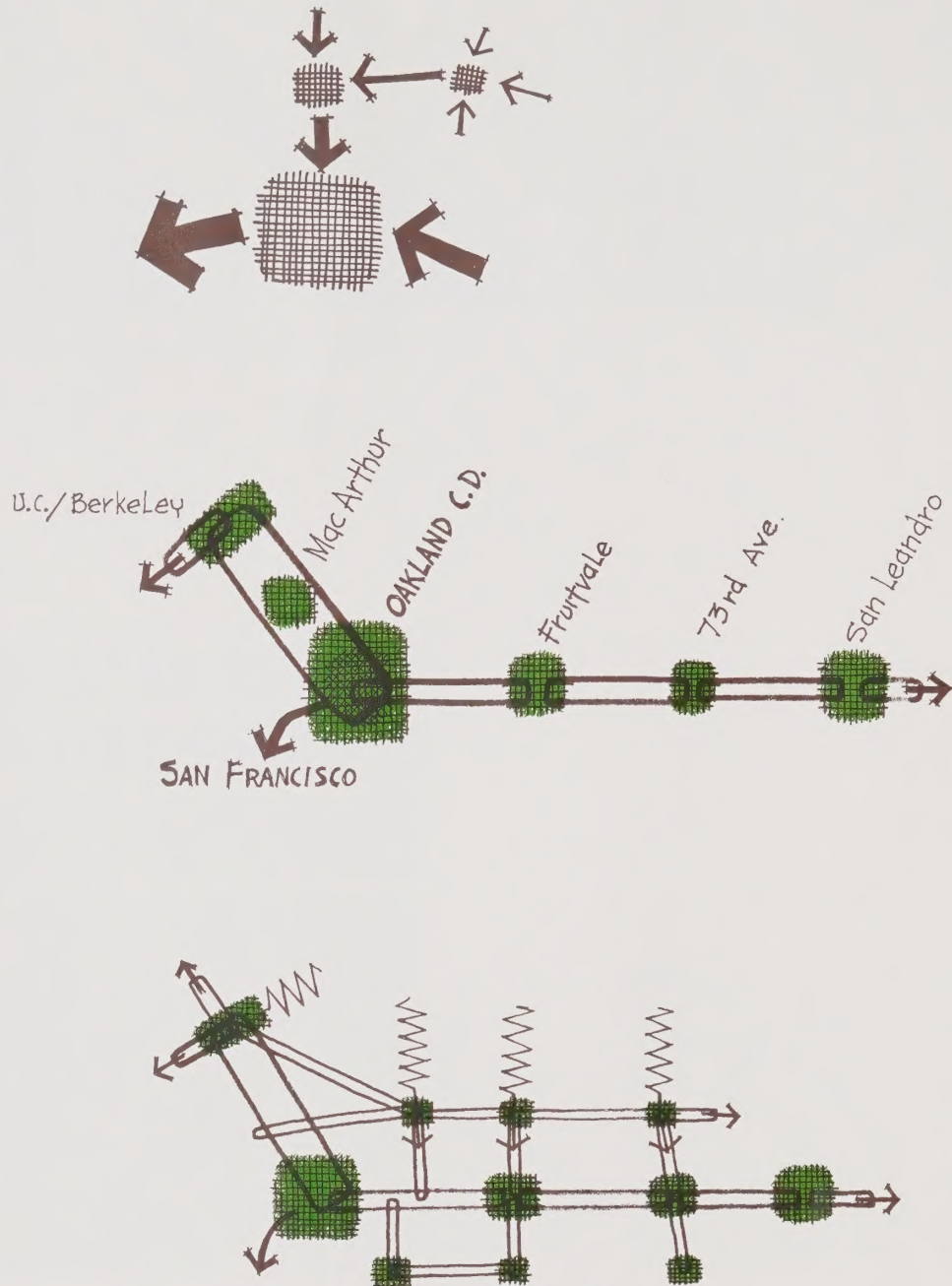
In developing a proposed city structure from the alternatives selected above, the following basic design concepts were followed.

The intensity of activity at each point should be related to the degree of accessibility there, and vice-versa. For example, the largest concentration of shopping facilities should be served by freeways and rapid transit. Following this principle will take best advantage of transit and major street facilities, and minimize through traffic in low-density areas. The intensity of activity at each point should be made clear by the scale, height, and spacing of buildings.

The Oakland Central District—hub of all modes of transportation—should be strengthened as the dominant functional and symbolic center of the East Bay. The Central District Core is linked by BART directly to San Francisco, to the downtown Berkeley-University of California cluster and to important sub-regional centers at MacArthur Boulevard, Fruitvale Avenue, 73rd Avenue, and downtown San Leandro. The important link to Berkeley along the Grove-Shafter Freeway/Telegraph Avenue spine should be accompanied by high-intensity corridor development.

Secondary corridors of medium-high or high intensity are already beginning to develop along important routes perpendicular to the intercity BART lines. They should be strengthened and clarified, serving as community activity spines and routes for convenient feeder bus lines to the BART stations (thereby vastly extending the benefits from rapid transit). These corridors should be capitalized on as locations for higher-density housing, which in turn will support adjacent commercial and recreational facilities.

The creek system should be capitalized on as a positive element in the





physical environment. Apartments should be encouraged to develop in corridors along important creeks. Also schools, libraries, and recreation areas should relate to creek channels in a recognizable, connected system of community facilities.

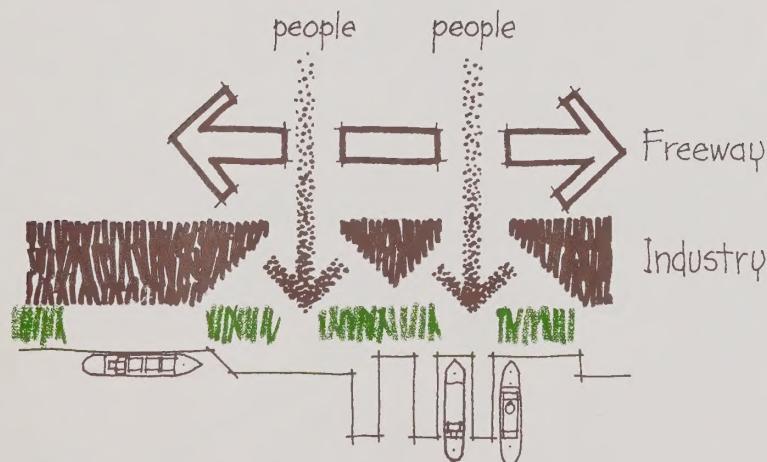
The almost-total industrial hold on the waterfront should be loosened, and recreational use made of several large sections. To facilitate this, pedestrian routes and important trafficways such as Madison Street should be extended attractively to the water-edge. The narrowness of the industrial belt at several places makes it practical to accompany these routes with an actual extension of residential or commercial facilities right down to the water.

DESIGN STRUCTURE

The illustrative **Design Structure** shown on page 16 translates the preceding concepts into a pattern of three-dimensional forms.

It suggests an image (definite in its broad structure, only illustrative in its details) toward which the city's physical form should evolve. Only the dominant elements are shown—a coherent, city-wide network of major open spaces, the main circulation channels, and the highest-intensity clusters and corridors of buildings. This "skeleton" provides an organizing framework within which growth—or "filling out"—can occur.

Certain freeways may be needed beyond those shown in the Design Structure, according to the circulation study done by the 701 Project's Advance Transportation Planning Team.¹ Possible locations include (a) an alignment (Route 61) running north from Alameda through Berkeley west of the Nimitz and Eastshore Freeways; (b) the corridor (Route 77) from the Nimitz to the Warren Freeway in the general vicinity of Fruitvale Avenue and High Street; (c) the corridor (Route 13)



1. 701 Project Advance Transportation Planning Team, *Oakland Preliminary Circulation Plan, 1966-1985: A Technical Study of Circulation Needs and Plan Proposals to the Year 1985* (1968).

PROPOSED DESIGN STRUCTURE



**LAND USE BY MAJOR CATEGORY (PERCENTAGES):
OAKLAND, EXISTING AND PROPOSED**

Category ¹	Existing: Occupied Land	Existing: Total Land	Proposed: Total Land
Commercial	9	8	8
High-Density Residential	5	4	8
High-Medium- Density Residential	8	7	9
Low-Medium- Density Residential	18	16	12
Low-Density Residential	22	20	24
Industrial, Utility, or Transportation	23	21	21
Institutional or Governmental	4	4	5
Park or Recreational	12	11	13
Vacant or Agricultural	—	9	—
TOTAL	100	100	100

1. Each category includes streets. "Residential" areas include the elementary schools and small neighborhood parks located in them. "Vacant" includes only large unoccupied tracts; scattered vacant lots are included in the other categories.

The figures in the above table suggest the approximate direction and magnitude of the changes proposed between the existing and future land-use patterns. (In absolute numbers, the city's existing total land area is 53.4 square miles.)

from the Metropolitan Oakland International Airport to the Warren Freeway in the general vicinity of 73rd to 106th Avenues; (d) an extension of the Warren Freeway through Berkeley near Ashby Avenue. These possible freeways are not shown, however, in the Design Structure since their possible location—and even the need for some of them—remains uncertain.

Any new freeway should be very carefully designed and located to fit into the Design Structure as a **positive** feature. It could, for example, be accompanied by a corridor of open space and high-intensity development—desirably one of those already shown in the Design Structure.

The proposed Design Structure assumes major change in many parts of the city. The most important of these areas—which usually take the form of corridors—are shown on the map on page 18. Change in these eight areas will be caused by major new transportation facilities or park development, or by construction on large vacant tracts.

LAND USE

The map on page 19 translates all these concepts into a desirable future land-use pattern, which can be compared directly with the "Existing Land Use" map.¹

For each area a basic future use is suggested which would serve to achieve the policies proposed in this report, and which represents the Urban Design Team's best thinking at this time. Obviously, changes in the map's detailed pattern may become desirable as conditions change.²

The future allotment of land provides scope for very substantial growth. Analysis suggests that the proposed pattern could comfortably accommodate a population of at least 600,000—well above the most probable 1985 "high" projection of 547,000.

1. Future land use in adjacent cities is based primarily on their adopted general plans or current planning studies.

2. As of this writing, the City is reviewing the Port of Oakland's Shoreline Plan. The Plan calls for major harbor and airport expansion into the Bay. The areas designated by the Port are schematic only and would require additional feasibility and engineering studies before they could be meaningfully mapped. In addition, there are three areas where an alternative land use would be highly desirable if the right circumstances arise: (a) The area near West MacArthur Boulevard and Telegraph Avenue, next to Medical Center Hill, where a major medical training center could be located; (b) portions of the Tidal Canal, especially near the 29th Avenue bridge, where waterfront apartments might be built; (c) the site of the existing General Motors plant on East 14th Street (shown as industrial in the map only because of this plant), which should be developed with housing if this plant should ever close.

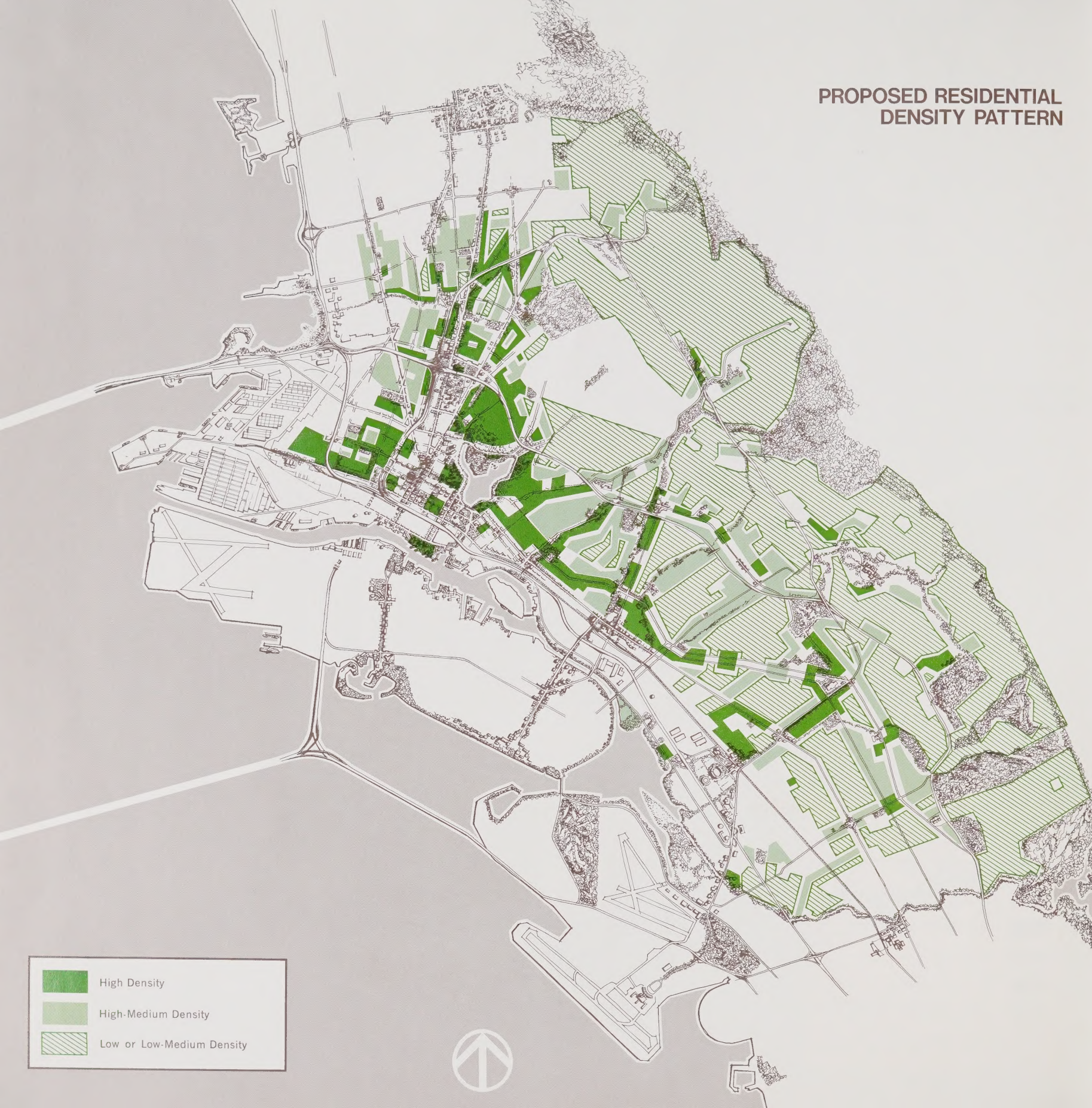
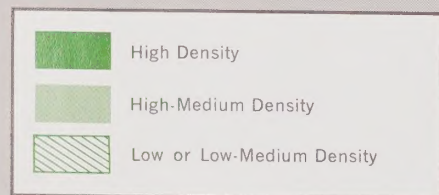
AREAS OF MAJOR CHANGE

-
- 1 Telegraph Avenue/
Broadway/
Central Berkeley
 - 2 Seventh Street
 - 3 Greater Central District
 - 4 14th Avenue/
Brooklyn Basin
 - 5 Fruitvale/Sausal
and Peralta Creeks
 - 6 73rd Avenue/Coliseum
 - 7 San Leandro Bay
and Creek
 - 8 Merritt College/
Portuguese Flats

ILLUSTRATIVE FUTURE LAND USE



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DENSITY PATTERN



The first of the four components of the city Design Structure is formed by groups and areas of residential buildings.

Projections made by Stanford Research Institute for the 701 Project suggest that the city's total population could increase from 373,500 in 1966 to a probable range (depending on alternative assumptions) from 427,000 to 547,000 in 1985.¹ On the average, the future population is expected to have considerably higher incomes, and a different family-size profile. The resulting changes in the types of housing units demanded will require major changes in Oakland's present housing supply. For one reason or another—obsolescence, dilapidation, demolition for new construction, etc.—at least a fifth of today's housing units will probably need to be replaced by 1985.

Today, a very high proportion of Oakland's neighborhoods exhibit physical change. Large areas seem to be decaying gradually. Extensive areas are increasing in density—most gradually, a few rapidly. Except in the Hill Areas where single-family houses are still being built on vacant land, density increase usually means demolition of old houses to make room for new apartments. Code enforcement and public improvements entailing housing demolition are causing extensive changes in some neighborhoods.

In spite of all these factors, though, many residential areas seem to be basically stable—neither decaying nor increasing in density. In almost every major part of the city there are pleasant areas of pridefully maintained homes. Many of Oakland's individual houses are prime visual resources. The ornate Victorian dwellings of West Oakland, the architecturally sophisticated Shingle Style homes of Central Oakland, many of the older apartment buildings near Lake Merritt—all of these contribute immensely to the city-

scape, and should be preserved.

Because of such physical characteristics as consistent or unique architecture (Oak Center's old Victorian houses, for example) or interesting topography (the Lake-oriented slopes of Adams Point), a few neighborhoods have a strong feeling of identity. Many other areas have, at best, only a weak visible identity. Often, though, a seemingly featureless neighborhood has a theme which can be identified and carried on. Increasing a neighborhood's identifiability, by strengthening its distinctive characteristics, is a major objective that should be pursued in the design of both new public and private facilities.

In the Illustrative Future Land Use map, nearly all the existing residential areas remain in residential use. New residential areas are shown in several places, notably in vacant sections of the Hills and at some shoreline locations.

THE DENSITY PATTERN AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHOICE

The monotonous evenness of texture, lack of local contrast, and lack of environmental choice across broad sections of Oakland have already been mentioned. Overall there is (except in the areas near Lake Merritt) no strong, clear pattern of higher-density centers or corridors.

Oakland's housing age and quality pattern—a residue of early flatland development and late development in the hills—tends to promote a social stratification directly related to income. Today the expensive, newer homes in the almost exclusively single-family Hills contrast sharply with the cheaper, older houses and two-story apartments that characterize the flats. Enriching the mix of housing types within these broad areas would have social as well as visual benefits.

1. Stanford Research Institute, *Population Projections and Housing Requirements for Oakland in 1985*, December 1968.

The Illustrative Future Land Use map suggests a future pattern of residential densities which could accommodate very sizable population growth while minimizing disruption to the city's existing stable lower-density areas. It also tries to allow for a wider range of housing choice than exists today within each broad section of the city.

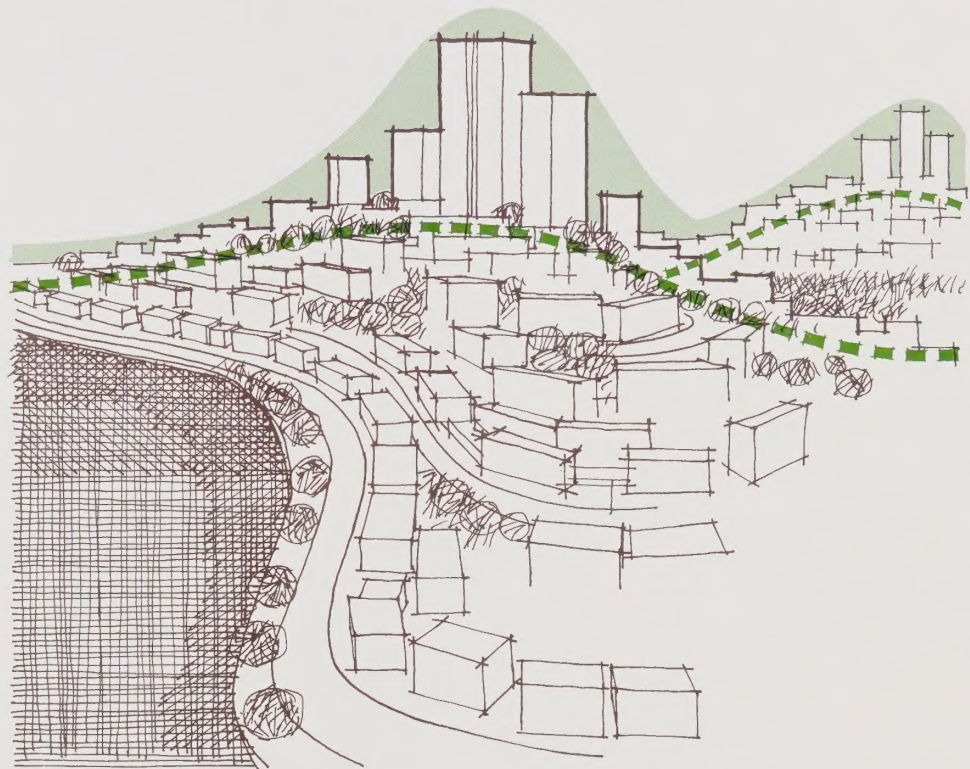
It would channel higher-density development into a wide variety of locations offering accessibility and amenity.

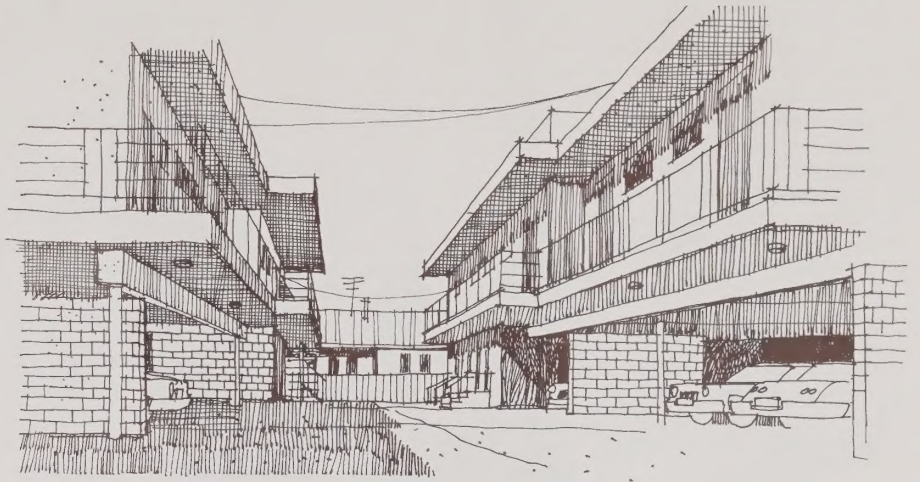
The "accessibility" principle means that densities should be highest in the areas which are most accessible. Particularly high densities are proposed at or near each of the city's eight rapid-transit stations, a pattern that in turn would encourage BART usage. Corridors of high or high-medium density are proposed also along major traffic ways, including especially the Grove-Shafter/Telegraph Avenue/Broadway corridor, and 73rd Avenue and several other corridors across East Oakland, South Central Oakland, and Fruitvale. There should also be several corridors in the Hills.

Desirably, these higher-density corridors should be an ample several blocks wide rather than consisting only of the major-street frontages themselves. This pattern would allow wider spacing between large apartment buildings, and reduce traffic conflict and noise for the residents.

The principle of "amenity" means, especially, that as many people as possible should be allowed to live near such features as parks, creeks, and shorelines and on hillsides with good views. Overall, little advantage is now taken of such features. Clusters of apartments or townhouses around creeks and parks will ensure that they get maximum use; visually, the building clusters should help to define these spaces.

Special care is needed at such locations—around Lake Merritt, for in-





stance—to ensure that hillside apartment construction takes advantage of the views, but does not block them for others, and that it sensitively reflects the topography. Across the foothills between Lake Merritt and Fruitvale Avenue, for example, tall buildings could be located on the hilltops to emphasize their height, with lower structures in the valleys between. The accompanying sketch illustrates this concept.

In the less accessible areas **between** the major corridors, densities should remain relatively low. In the flatlands these are predominantly single-family, though often zoned to allow apartment construction. Despite some intrusion from low-rise apartments, the majority of these areas seem to be more-or-less stable, the houses relatively inexpensive yet well maintained.

Some of these flatland sections (such as Columbian Gardens and part of Sobrante Park) should be retained as exclusively single-family areas. In others, while they would remain low or low-medium in density and dominantly single-family, an admixture of well de-

signed town houses, **small** apartment buildings, or true garden apartments should be built.

LOW-RISE APARTMENT BUILDINGS

Cheaply thrown together on a small lot, the typical low-rise apartment house of recent years presents an environment dominated by cars and asphalt. Landscaping is minimal at best. Little concern is shown for existing neighborhood character; the typical building is a two-story pink or tan “shoebox,” whether its neighbors be Victorian, shingle, or clapboard bungalow. It is built as close as zoning allows to the property lines, regardless of the effect on unit privacy or the neighbors. The front “yard” is often a parking lot, the other yards unusable remnants. Developments like this downgrade the areas in which they are built, thereby accelerating the conversion of more homes into apartment sites.

The same pattern may be repeated indefinitely, as long as demand for this kind of facility continues and City policy remains in its present form.



Zoning amendments and review criteria should be developed (and enforced) to ensure that these buildings are more livable and that they are visually harmonious with their neighborhoods. These might include, at least in some zones:

1. prohibiting large apartment buildings on lots of, say, less than 10,000 square feet and 80 feet in width—or at least reducing the allowable density on smaller lots;
2. providing density bonuses for developments which contribute a portion of their property to increase an adjacent open space (such as a creek), or which provide a large amount of landscaping and totally conceal their parking from public view;
3. requiring the actual planting (or preservation) of a certain number of trees related to lot size;
4. reducing the minimum size for planned-unit-development bonuses to less than the present 60,000 square feet, to give an incentive to smaller assemblages of lots within built-up areas;
5. preparing design criteria for apartments in specific neighborhoods, to ensure at least a minimum attempt to respect the scale, architectural character, and finishes of neighboring homes;
6. prohibiting buildings with long exterior-access balconies except where the developer can show assurance of privacy;
7. encouraging developers of adjacent lots to coordinate their developments so that, for example, both their buildings could go right up to the common property line, thereby allowing widened yards on the farther sides.

THE STREET SCENE

Most of the residential areas below the MacArthur Freeway are typified by wide streets, a shortage of street trees, and an abundance of utility poles. The sketch on this page illustrates this all-too-common scene.

Massive tree-planting programs are obviously called for in these areas, as suggested below on page 39. In addition to this, the City should vigorously pursue its policy of eventually undergrounding all utilities.

The sketch on the following page illustrates one way a typical minor street in the flatlands could be improved. The present dominance of asphalt is lessened by narrowing the roadway through new curbs and widened planter strips. These strips in turn provide generous space for street trees, planted at no more than 40-foot intervals on both

sides of the street. They also provide room for trenches in which to underground the utilities.

THE STREET PATTERN

In most of Oakland's flatter residential areas the street pattern is a patchwork quilt of mismatching, variously angled grids in which the adjoining old subdivisions connect only by accident, and in which the old intercity routes are often diagonals opposed to the grids. The resulting pattern is confusing and provides for no evident focus, yet allows through and rapid travel nearly everywhere.

Ideally, fast arterial streets should

bound (not sever) residential areas of varying sizes. Each of the resulting "precincts" would contain a limited number of collector streets designed for relatively slow traffic. Off these collectors would be minor local streets which were either loops or cul-de-sacs.

This idealized hierarchical pattern should be the model toward which gradual improvements in the local street patterns are directed. A moderately successful effort in this direction was the Clinton Park Urban Renewal Project's installation of traffic diverters and narrowed curbs at intersections. The street patterns in many other areas would lend themselves to similar but improved revisions.



NEIGHBORHOOD FACILITIES AND EVENTFULNESS

Any residential area seems to need some local contrast and variety, some "events" within the neighborhood texture. Most of the city's neighborhoods are weak in this kind of local interest.

The most important key to neighborhood eventfulness consists of local schools and parks, which are discussed later in this report. Other things that can provide local interest may be clusters of apartments contrasting with single-family sections, old mansions with big grounds scattered here and there (as in East Oakland) amid little bungalows, creeks or other local topography, or churches on prominent corners.

Another feature that is often overlooked is the neighborhood store. Scores of little establishments are scattered across the flatter residential areas, sometimes all by themselves and sometimes in small clusters. Unfortunately, many of them are marginal and less well maintained than the surrounding houses. To their credit, though, they provide small focal points within the neighborhood: an excuse for the housewife to walk a couple of blocks for a loaf of bread, a gathering place for children on their way home from school. It may be desirable to allow them in more residential zones, subject to adequate design standards and controls.



The second element of the long-range Design Structure is formed by groups and areas of commercial, civic, and industrial buildings—to put it another way, where people work and shop.

Great forces are inevitably reshaping these areas. The demanding access and parking requirements of the automobile age are destroying old forms and replacing them with new ones—planned shopping centers, drive-ins, industrial parks. Traffic patterns are shifting and trade-area population and incomes changing. Changes in business organization and technology are requiring new facility types and new kinds of locations. There seems to be a general trend toward fewer but larger establishments—corner stores being replaced by supermarkets, for example. Considering these and other changes, it is likely that a high proportion of the city's existing commercial and industrial facilities are obsolete or becoming so.

There will certainly be major changes in Oakland's economic profile, with corresponding effects on the types of floor space needed. Employment projections made by Stanford Research Institute for the 701 Project imply that total employment in Oakland could grow from 178,000 in 1965 to some 225,000 in 1985—a 26 per cent increase.¹ Looking behind this aggregate trend, manufacturing employment is expected to decline and retail-trade employment to grow at a moderate rate, while rapid growth is projected for finance, insurance, and real estate, services, government, and transportation, communication, and utilities.

This chapter proposes a physical setting within which Oakland can achieve its commercial and industrial growth potential, based as closely as possible on foreseeable accessibility and other changes. It suggests a variety of identifiable functional areas which are

strong enough to compete for Bay Area growth.

Specialization of commercial and industrial areas should be encouraged, through the grouping of similar or mutually supporting establishments into "medical centers," "auto rows," and so on.

A clear hierarchical structure of several different levels of commercial centers—from the Central District Core to the neighborhood centers—is proposed.

The visual quality of all commercial and industrial areas should be vastly improved, and open spaces, planting, and similar amenities should be added to make them more humane shopping and working environments.

Obsolete facilities and decaying areas should be removed, but old structures should not be torn down simply because they are old. Oakland has many fine old individual buildings—such as ornate banks and theaters from the 1920's—even whole groups of buildings or areas like the streets of old loft buildings behind Jack London Square which could be adapted to new functions. Elegant remodeling is often easier to achieve than elegant new construction. Wherever possible, these existing "design resources" should be retained, and new facilities integrated with them.

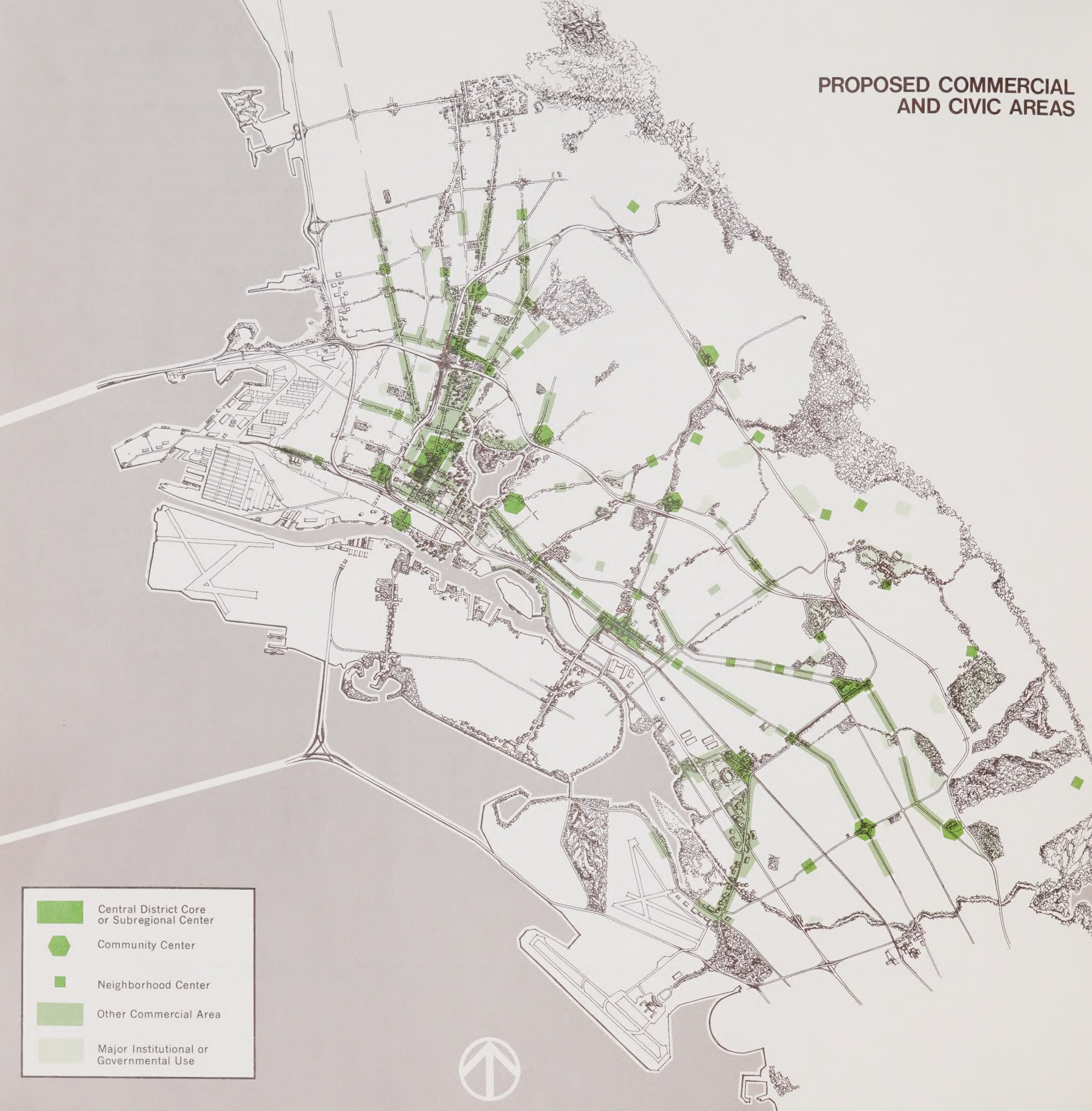
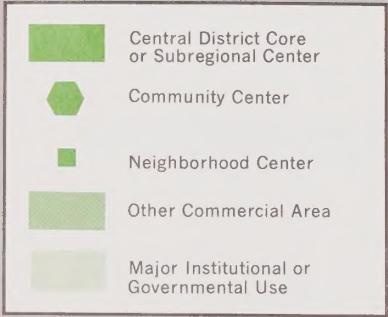
SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS

Signs can be, and are in some places, a real contribution to the visual environment as well as an asset to business. In Oakland, however, the cityscape is papered with too many signs that are degrading and obtrusive.

There seems to be little concern for the surroundings. Along the endless commercial strips, big rooftop billboards and tall sign pylons impose their gaudy presence on the residential

1. Stanford Research Institute, *Economic Projections for Oakland to 1975 and 1985*, December 1968.

PROPOSED COMMERCIAL
AND CIVIC AREAS



streets behind. The same kinds of signs and billboards are found in small neighborhood shopping districts as in the full-blown East 14th Street strip. In the latter billboards and big, flashing signs are often acceptable; in the former they are clearly out of place, and should be kept out.

Everywhere, confusing assortments of signs and billboards result in chaos instead of communication.

At the city scale, signs lose impact by being too evenly dispersed in a long monotonous straggle, with few real contrasts. On the rare occasions where there is a cluster of signs followed by a visual “rest”—Auto Row followed by Mosswood Park, for example—the effect is pleasing.

This suggests that a few sections, perhaps some of the commercial strips and entertainment areas, should be practically control-free while other, intervening sections are tightly regulated, with billboards and flashing signs prohibited and the size and design of other signs restricted.

Strict controls should be exercised along important visual gateways to the city, such as West Grand Avenue.

The height and location of rooftop billboards need to be controlled in most areas. Eventually, billboards might be totally eliminated from most of the city.

THE GREATER CENTRAL DISTRICT

The Oakland Central District Plan, adopted in 1966, outlined basic policies for the area bounded by the Grove-Shafter Freeway, Lake Merritt, the Estuary, and 27th Street. However, the 701 Project's Urban Design Consultant recommends that a considerably bigger “Greater Central District”—shaped by the topographic amenity of Lake Merritt and by the freeway network—be defined. This emerging entity would include, in addition to the

downtown proper, the areas on all sides of the Lake, most of the land extending up to the MacArthur Freeway, and perhaps parts of West Oakland as well.

Within this larger district, the high-intensity, retail-and-office Core along Broadway from 11th Street to Grand Avenue should be clearly dominant. Floor-area ratios and large-scale commercial development elsewhere in the city should be controlled to ensure this dominance.

The Greater Central District should also include a variety of specialized, complementary commercial, civic, and recreational centers, as well as important close-in residential areas.

An “Inner Ring” of medium-intensity commercial development and close-in residential accommodations should surround the Core to provide services which support or supplement it. Beyond this, lower-intensity, automobile-oriented offices and business and consumer services would locate on the inner portions of Seventh, Grove, East 12th, and East 14th Streets and Telegraph and Grand Avenues. A new office and business-service strip could develop along West Grand Avenue, the most direct route between downtown Oakland and San Francisco.

The Civic Center should expand and intensify, with the addition of new public facilities and the stimulus provided by the adjacent rapid-transit station.

Auto Row, the long-established, prominently located automotive district along Broadway from 24th Street to the MacArthur Freeway, should be preserved and enhanced.

SUBREGIONAL CENTERS

Certain locations in Oakland **outside** the Greater Central District also enjoy important assets for major commercial investment. These assets include both

visual amenity (parkside location, for example) and accessibility (the outlying BART stations, especially).

Rather than weaken the Core, the proper development of several major subcenters within Oakland could so enhance the city's general image that the Core would benefit as well. They would inject an element of renewal around which residential and institutional rebuilding could be stimulated. Such an impetus would be especially appropriate in the dreary areas east of the Lake, which are sorely lacking in the kind of visual focus which intense commercial centers can give.

In all these subregional centers, however, the allowable density of development should be less than that in the Core, to avoid the formation of concentrations large enough to weaken it.

Four such centers are suggested:

West MacArthur and Pill Hill. Intensive commercial development (primarily offices) should cluster around the MacArthur rapid-transit station and extend along West MacArthur Boulevard to include the existing MacArthur/Broadway shopping center. All this should be linked visually with the hospitals and doctors' offices of nearby Medical Center Hill ("Pill Hill"). The land between existing Pill Hill and the BART station offers an excellent site for some kind of medical training center.

Fruitvale. This center, along East 14th Street from about 28th to 36th Avenue, should include both retail and office facilities.

Eastmont. The nucleus of this (primarily retail) center would be the Eastmont Shopping Center, now expanding at 73rd and Bancroft Avenues.

Coliseum. This would include a tight cluster of office and other facilities around the Coliseum rapid-transit station. This should be closely linked to the Coliseum Complex itself and to the adjacent commercial strip along Hegen-

berger Road from here down to the Metropolitan Oakland International Airport. This strip is already becoming an airport-oriented corridor of large, freestanding, showcase structures, especially motor hotels and office buildings. (A high standard of design should be maintained here, with generous landscaping and an effort to integrate the corridor with San Leandro Bay and the creeks that flow into it.)

SMALLER COMMERCIAL CENTERS

In addition to the Greater Central District and the subregional centers, the city will continue to need many smaller commercial centers.

The location and scale of these centers should be determined by their relative accessibility and trade-area population, as well as by local amenities and established development patterns. Based on these principles, the map on page 28 suggests a tentative hierarchy of "community" and "neighborhood" centers.

Most of the community and neighborhood centers should be primarily retail shopping areas. A few would specialize in nonretail activities, notably Jack London Square (restaurants, entertainment, and motels). However, a wide variety of establishments should be encouraged in **each** center, to ensure that it is active both in the daytime and evening.

A **neighborhood** shopping area offers primarily convenience goods: those normally purchased daily or weekly. A food market is usually its biggest establishment. The Glenview shopping district and the Lincoln Square Shopping Center are existing neighborhood centers.

By contrast, a **community** shopping area provides a much wider variety of goods and services. Typically its biggest establishments are junior department

stores and supermarkets. Present examples include the Dimond and Montclair shopping districts.

Many areas have unique characteristics or specialties which could be capitalized on. These include the Temescal shopping district on Telegraph (Italian restaurants and specialty shops); the center at 23rd Avenue and East 14th (Mexican shops and restaurants); and the Rockridge and Claremont shopping districts on College Avenue (art galleries and antique stores).

In form, the shopping areas should be either planned shopping centers (groups of buildings developed under single control on a large site) or the traditional shopping district (individually owned buildings with continuous storefronts along the sidewalk).

In order to hold their own against the new planned centers, the older shopping districts must provide comparable amenities. **Each** center should have some form of plaza or usable open space. All should have adequate off-street parking.

Randomly located parking lots and open uses should not, however, be allowed to disrupt important shopping frontages. In any case, **each** shopping area's size and layout should be determined by convenience to pedestrian shoppers.

Each center should **look** like a center. A clear contrast with the surrounding areas is important. Construction of multistory buildings should be encouraged as one way to achieve this.

COMMERCIAL STRIPS

By far the largest mileage of commercial streets outside the Central District is occupied by long strips of noncompact development along major trafficways. These consist largely of freestanding commercial buildings,

separated from each other by parking lots, driveways, or even houses and apartments.

These areas serve many purposes. They provide sites for businesses seeking inexpensive land, space for drive-in facilities, and prominent locations for billboards and businesses oriented to passing auto traffic.

Their usual problems are poor visual quality (seeming endlessness, excessive paving unrelieved by any planting, gaudy and self-defeating signs, squalid back yards and dominant signs that blight nearby residential streets) and many sections of vacancy and obsolescence.

Several things should be done to improve these long stretches.

There should be concentrated wind-row buffer planting along rear property lines which abut residential areas, with thick clusters of trees right on the side streets.



There should be strategic major planting along the commercial streets themselves.

The strips should be broken up, by intensifying some portions of them and decommercializing others (changing them to residential or residential-and-office, or building schools, small parks, or other public facilities fronting right on the street).

Specialized clusters of related activities should be encouraged, as one way to give "structure" to a commercial strip.

Sections which should be specialized include:

1. Telegraph Avenue north of the Grove-Shafter Freeway (offices);
2. College Avenue (antique stores and art galleries);
3. Telegraph next to Pill Hill (offices and medical-related establishments);
4. West Grand Avenue and East 12th and East 14th Streets near the edge of the Central District (business services and supplies, offices);
5. the Embarcadero at Brooklyn Basin (boat sales, restaurants, etc.);
6. 66th Avenue near the Coliseum (commercial recreation, restaurants);
7. Hegenberger Road (motor hotels, office buildings).

THE INDUSTRIAL AND TRANSPORTATION-TERMINAL BELT

Stretching along the shoreline from end to end of Oakland, the great belt of industry, military supply depots, and

ship and air terminals accounts for a third of the city's employment. Visually, the industrial belt's most striking aspect is its fantastic variety of forms, patterns, and environmental quality.

There are still large sections of developable vacant land within the industrial belt, especially near San Leandro Bay. **But more than this, there are several areas of spotty or seedy development which should be used far more intensively for industry or terminals.**

These include:

1. the mixtures of old houses and poorly maintained industrial buildings in the Kennedy Tract;
2. the underdeveloped areas around Ernie Raimondi Field and under the Nimitz/MacArthur Freeway interchange in West Oakland;
3. portions of the West Oakland railroad yards;
4. the semiderelict stretches of shoreline west of Market Street and at Clinton Basin, where the Port of Oakland has plans for highly desirable new ship-terminal facilities;
5. parts of the Metropolitan Oakland International Airport itself, which would seem to offer within its existing borders fine sites for airport-oriented industries.

The industrial belt's ragged boundary with the adjacent residential neighborhoods is a serious problem, depressing long stretches of adjacent housing.

Land-use changes should be made (employing urban-renewal powers where necessary) which will simplify and stabilize this boundary. Local street

patterns should be modified to keep industrial traffic out of residential sections. Along the border itself, adequate buffering should be provided through some combination of heavy planting and landscaped parking lots.

Although it contains some extremely handsome buildings, by-and-large the industrial area—at least its public face—is dingy and depressing. Several rather simple actions could begin to remedy this and transform the city's industrial areas into the showplaces they deserve to be.

Joint public-private windrow planting should be pursued, especially to mark routes of public access to the waterfront. Rows of tall trees would help to break up the flat monotony of these lowland areas.

Industries with shoreline frontage should make every effort to allow public access to the water and to make such access inviting and visually pleasing.

Industries with processes which are interesting or instructional to watch should be encouraged to provide pleasant spaces where these activities can be viewed. Examples are ship repair and containerized cargo-handling.

Open ground areas should be used more efficiently (otherwise they tend to attract dead storage and waste), and they should be screened from view by fencing or planting.

All industrial properties, but especially those with tall structures or freeway or shoreline frontage, should be encouraged to keep their premises clean and well maintained and to paint their structures (the more colorful the better).

The third component of the skeletal Design Structure is the city's open-space network. This consists not only of public parks, plazas, and recreation areas but also such park-like lands as college campuses and reservoirs, as well as wooded creeks and other natural open spaces.

Today, the pattern of open spaces is heavily oriented to the Hills. Here great semiwild regional parks, which take up whole valleys, extend far out behind Oakland, and reach in through Joaquin Miller down to Dimond Park. There are important opportunities for making more intensive use of these spaces as well as for adding to the park system here. For example, a continuous park strip could be woven through the Portuguese Flats area between Redwood Road and Oak Knoll Naval Hospital, linking up with Skyline Boulevard and the new Merritt College campus.

Unfortunately, this great park system ends at the foothills. Except for the magnificent water-park at Lake Merritt, Oakland's ten-mile belt of flatlands and lower slopes is relieved only by school playgrounds and by a handful of old-style rectangular city parks such as Mosswood and San Antonio.

In an attempt to correct this imbalance between the Hills and the flats, and to fulfill the needs of all Oaklanders for park and recreation space, a city-wide open-space system is proposed.¹ This attempts to build upon existing open-space features by connecting them with logical links and adding to them where feasible. It involves saving and enhancing the creeks for public enjoy-

ment, and using several large sections of the shoreline for recreation. It calls for greatly adding to the neighborhood and community parks in the flatter residential areas, and providing numerous plazas and small urban open spaces in the city's dense shopping and working areas.

THE SHORELINE

One of Oakland's greatest natural assets and recreational opportunities is its shoreline.² Yet little of this potential has been achieved so far. There are currently no major shoreline parks in Oakland, and of 19 miles of waterfront barely more than a mile is officially accessible to the public.

Certainly public access to the waterfront should be improved, and a wide range of activities encouraged there—including public and commercial recreation, restaurants, marinas, and residential use. At the same time shoreline industry and shipping should be retained, continuing that fascinating contrast of forms and activities that explains the shoreline's special charm.

Bay fill should be undertaken only after conclusive demonstration that its benefits will outweigh its resulting environmental and other costs. Existing underused waterfront land should be redeveloped before any fill proposals are undertaken.

Major recreational development should be concentrated in four shoreline segments (most of them now vacant or underused):³

1. the section north of the Bay Bridge Approach;

1. Small neighborhood parks and school playgrounds are omitted from the map on page 34 because of its small scale, but should be understood as a vital part of the open space system.
2. This fact is recognized in the Port of Oakland's shoreline development plan, adopted in 1968, which contains proposals for public and commercial recreational areas at many places along the shoreline, alternating with industrial sections and expanded marine terminals.
3. The Port of Oakland's Shoreline Plan also proposes major recreational use for these four sections.

PROPOSED OPEN-SPACE SYSTEM



- Existing Major Park or Park-Like Space
- New Major Open Space or Creek Conservation
- New Plaza
- New Marina



-
2. the Central District Shoreline;
 3. Brooklyn Basin;
 4. San Leandro Bay.

In addition, smaller-scale facilities should be provided at a variety of other locations, such as small fishing areas or pedestrianways and attractive plazas next to ship terminals and the bridges.

Section North of Bay Bridge Approach. The shoreline north of the Bay Bridge Approach is unique—undeveloped, seminatural, almost park-like, with bright green tidal islands and mud flats supporting a large wild-bird population. To the extent possible, this stretch should be kept in its natural state and should provide for both wildlife preservation and a sizable “natural” shoreline park. It is of utmost importance here to preserve the vast sweep of water “open space” at this highly dramatic, but strangely neglected, gateway to the entire East Bay.

Central District Shoreline. A continuous park link should be developed between Jack London Square and Lake Merritt. The Central District shoreline along the Estuary is a vital link in this proposal, and should be developed to include a waterside pedestrian promenade, accompanied by shoreline residential, recreational, and commercial facilities. The first element in such a link is currently being designed—a large waterside park at the junction of Lake Merritt Channel and the Estuary.

Brooklyn Basin. Brooklyn Basin, that section of shoreline which cradles Government Island, has the beginnings of a commercial-recreation area, with numerous boating, restaurant, and marina-sales activities. These should be added to, with provision also for some public park space and waterfront apart-

ments. A shoreline pedestrianway would be very appropriate here. It would be highly desirable to connect this area, via an overpass (at least for pedestrians) across the freeway, to 14th Avenue and the San Antonio Park neighborhood so close by. Also, if the Coast Guard base on Government Island ever becomes surplus, the island could be developed as a recreational center.

San Leandro Bay. San Leandro Bay should be preserved as a spacious body of water, with as much as possible of the bordering salt marshes retained in their natural state. The entire shoreline and a large amount of adjacent land should be devoted to parks and recreation. Finally, strong ties should be worked out to the Coliseum area and to San Leandro Creek.

THE CREEKS

Oakland has an extensive creek system; no less than thirteen important streams flow from the hills to the Bay. However, unsentimental and unimaginative land development has ignored these creeks, and obliterated or brutalized them at many points. Usually treated only as an inconvenient interruption of the developer's grid, they have rarely influenced the siting and quality of adjacent houses. They have been viewed mainly as a flood hazard, a dumping ground, a breeding place for rodents, and a police problem.

Yet the creek system, so badly neglected, is a precious natural resource. Its physical-form and open-space opportunities must be recognized, and appropriate action taken to capitalize upon them.

Since 1962, the Alameda County Flood Control District has pursued a

section-by-section "improvement" program of the major creek channels in Oakland. This program will serve to remedy the flood and health hazards associated with the creeks. At the same time it creates the opportunity—in conjunction with park and other programs—for greater public use of the creeks.

In large part so far, concrete-lined, industrial-looking canals are proposed to replace quiet, residential-looking wooded streams. These flood-control designs, which tend to be single-purpose in nature, should be re-examined and modified for multipurpose opportunities. **Designs which preserve existing trees and natural character should be encouraged.**

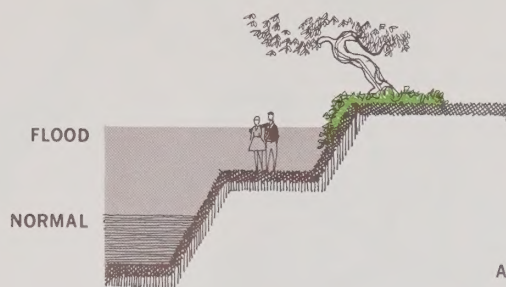
Quiet, wooded linear park strips with creekside walks—opening at intervals to wider park areas—should be developed along several streams, including Sausal and San Leandro and portions of Temescal and Arroyo Viejo.

Other creek sections (such as Peralta, Courtland, and Seminary Creeks)—though not necessarily being developed as public parks—should be preserved and enhanced as greenbelts of natural open space along which development which enhances this character should be encouraged.

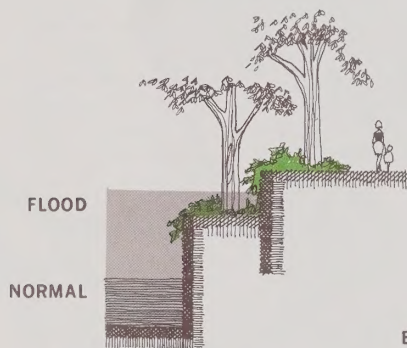
Many fine sites for garden apartments exist along the creeks. Those who develop them should be required or encouraged—through special zoning provisions—to enhance the creek and incorporate it as usable open space rather than culvert it or wall it off behind a parking lot. The illustrative site plan on this page demonstrates this concept.

Where creeks are crossed by important arterials, small parks should be

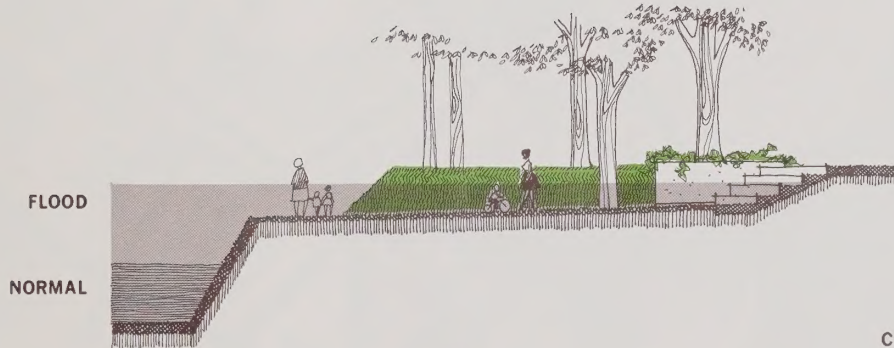




A



B



C

created to open up views down their wooded banks. One should strongly sense the crossing over of a creek; the street could give the feeling of being a bridge as it crosses a creek.

It is important to recognize that one creek may pass through many different types of areas and that different physical situations require different design solutions. The partial creek cross-sections on this page suggest possible alternative channel designs. All of these designs could be used along one creek.

Section A suggests a solution which would provide for a pedestrianway along the creek in a landscaped, relatively narrow right-of-way. The path is shown at a level which is next to the normal water level, but which would flood during maximum run-off.

Section B illustrates a restricted right-of-way situation, where the creek is to be considered as a linear open space only; no pedestrianway is suggested. Such a solution could save existing trees, such as the small one at the intermediate level.

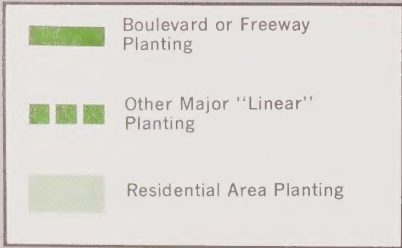
Section C—requiring a wide right-of-way—suggests how a large area adjacent to a creek could be utilized as a neighborhood park or recreation area during the summer or "normal" creek level periods, but which would be allowed to flood during maximum run-off. One example of an opportunity for such a solution exists at the end of Empire Road, on San Leandro Creek.

In each of the illustrations, the extra volume of water at flood stage is handled by temporarily covering landscaped or usable areas.

TREE PLANTING

Street trees can be looked at as an extension of open-space treatment—as

PROPOSED MAJOR TREE PLANTING



something that can give a park-like feeling to a whole neighborhood.

Throughout many sections of Oakland, especially in the flat areas east of the Lake, there is a severe shortage of street trees. Trees are important not so much for shade, but rather for contrast and visual relief from the drab, barren, and often overly-wide street areas.

As suggested later in this report, trees would be an excellent way of highlighting and enhancing major trafficways, and differentiating between various "levels" of streets.

Aside from this street-identification use, street trees should also be used for neighborhood or area identification. The flat areas of Oakland, as in many other cities, seem to stretch aimlessly forever; there is little or no sense of different subareas. Street trees could serve to identify neighborhoods.

To accomplish these goals, large trees should be planted along the city's boulevards and main arterials, beginning with selective planting at key intersections and along the drabbest sections. Other important streets should be planted with trees of smaller scale. Local streets within a neighborhood should generally be planted with even smaller-scale trees of uniform type. In this way, neighborhoods would be differentiated from one another, and would be bounded by major streets which, in turn, form a recognizable part of the city's hierarchical street network.

In addition to being along streets, trees should be planted along creeks and other linear open-space elements to emphasize them. Here there should be a generous amount of large trees, similar in scale to the boulevard and

major-arterial trees mentioned above, along with smaller "pedestrian-scale" trees.

The map on the opposite page, although not a precise plan, illustrates this concept; it suggests a concentrated program of major linear planting (major trafficways and creeks) and major area planting (neighborhoods) in sections where trees are rare.

Tree planting should also be used to enhance topography—to emphasize hilltops or ridges or to heal scars like the ugly quarry above Mills College.

Preserving trees is important, too. The finest existing trees in the flats are often on the grounds of occasional old farmhouses or Victorian estates, but these are continually falling prey to apartment construction. Developers should be encouraged to preserve and utilize these trees.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS AND SCHOOLS

In addition to the larger, topography-based open spaces of city-wide significance, Oakland should vastly expand its system of parks and recreation areas at the neighborhood and community levels. As mentioned earlier, huge areas of the city are almost totally lacking in open space.

Public schools are distributed quite evenly throughout Oakland. They make up the most promising potential for open space—and social and visual interest—within their neighborhoods. In reality, though, they usually do little to enhance their surroundings visually. Although the school buildings are generally well-maintained, the yards are usually barren, treeless reaches of asphalt surrounded by unplanted chain-

link fences.

Statistics developed recently by the School Building Committee of the Committee on Oakland School Needs show that several new schools are badly needed in the next few years, and about half the existing schools require site expansion.¹

Wherever possible, new neighborhood parks and open space should be provided in conjunction with needed new schools or school expansions. Land requirements would be reduced by a sharing of facilities, and a unified, convenient combination of school, neighborhood recreation center, and landscaped park would result.

New and expanded schools and parks should “hook into” and enhance the city-wide networks of major streets, important open spaces, and such natural features as creeks. In this way, they can better serve as landmarks and neighborhood focal points.

The appearance of all school yards, even those not needing expansion, should be improved through tree planting and other measures.

Here are only a few examples of the important opportunities for added neighborhood or community open space.

1. **Merritt Campus.** If the existing Merritt College site on Grove Street becomes surplus when the new junior-college campuses are opened, part of it could be developed into a major park to serve open-space-starved North Oakland.
2. **McClymonds High School.** Expansion of McClymonds High School could be coordinated with provision of other local civic facilities and directed to the east, creating a strong community center for West Oakland which would be viewed from, and in turn enhance, Market

Street or San Pablo Avenue.

3. **Other Secondary Schools.** Sizable parks could be created in coordination with needed school expansions at Elmhurst, Frick, Hamilton, and Lowell Junior High Schools and at Fremont and Castlemont High Schools.
4. **EBMUD Reservoirs.** Recreation space should be developed above some of the East Bay Municipal Utility District's covered reservoirs.

SMALL, URBAN OPEN SPACES

Aside from the problem of inadequate parks and recreation facilities in residential areas, Oakland has almost none of the small, intensively used plazas and similar “urban” spaces appropriate to major employment and shopping areas.

Usable urban plazas—and attractive pedestrianways leading to them—should be provided both in the Central District and at the outlying BART stations and shopping areas.

Several existing public open spaces should be vastly improved. The most prominent example is City Hall Plaza itself. The chain surrounding it should be removed, and the Plaza redesigned into a really usable space for downtown employees, shoppers, and visitors. The central blocks of Jack London Square—really just a pleasantly planted parking lot—should be redesigned to create, as the name implies, a true pedestrian “square.”

The presently unused rooftops of the city are an excellent opportunity for urban open spaces and outdoor dining areas. Many new buildings should provide for—and existing rooftops be reclaimed for—human use and enjoyment.

1. These are shown in the map on page 9, except for a needed new high school even the schematic location of which is undetermined.

The fourth element of the Design Structure consists of the city's network of freeways and important streets. As opposed to the first three components, which are essentially **areal** considerations, this element is concerned with **linear** experiences in the city. The importance of major trafficways to the Design Structure cannot be overstated. To a large degree they **are** the face of the city.

Probably the most vivid impression that many a visitor carries with him upon leaving Oakland is the incessant dreariness of its streetscape. The appearance of many streets is appallingly poor.

Major efforts must be made to vastly improve the visual quality of the city's trafficways.

Oakland's street and freeway system carries an increasingly heavy volume of traffic. According to the circulation study done by the 701 Project's Advance Transportation Planning Team, average daily vehicle-trips within, to and from, or through Oakland could increase from 1,150,000 in 1965 to some 1,830,000 trips a day by 1990—an increase of nearly 60 per cent.¹ Traffic analysis indicated that many major-street segments are already seriously congested or will become so by 1985 unless major construction is undertaken.

Accordingly, the Advance Transportation Planning Team developed proposals for major new streets and street widenings needed by 1985. (These are shown on the map on page 9.) Significant improvements would include development of a continuous "Embarcadero" route through the industrial belt; widening of several lateral (southwest-northeast) streets across Fruitvale and East and South Central Oakland; and widening of several existing streets,

1. 701 Project Advance Transportation Planning Team, **Oakland Preliminary Circulation Plan, 1966-1985: A Technical Study of Circulation Needs and Plan Proposals to the Year 1985** (1968).

and opening of some new street connections, in West Oakland and the Central District (to tie in with urban renewal activities and the Grove-Shafter Freeway).¹

A HIERARCHICAL STREET SYSTEM

Oakland's existing major-trafficway network is a confusing, largely undifferentiated system in which major streets are often barely distinguishable from minor ones. Frequently neither street width nor number of lanes nor special planting is a reliable clue to whether a street is intended for long-distance or purely neighborhood traffic.

There should be a clearly defined hierarchy of several different levels of trafficway, each of which performs a distinct principal function. A final, detailed, city-wide street-categories design plan should be agreed on by all agencies concerned, with each level in the hierarchy assigned a typical cross-section and a scale and type of planting and lighting appropriate to its purpose. (Further, a few individual streets should be singled out for special treatment.)

The cross-sections depicted on these pages suggest a starting point for the developing of such a plan. Typical designs for five street categories are shown.

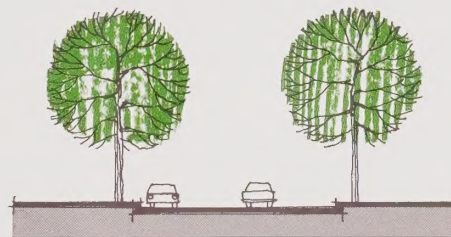
Boulevard. With strong vehicular orientation, this class would include wide, fast streets, especially major entrances to the city. Designed to carry relatively long-distance through traffic, the boulevards would form a vital second-level network of trafficways connecting with and supplementing the freeway network. Where possible they should operate as "expressways," with



BOULEVARD

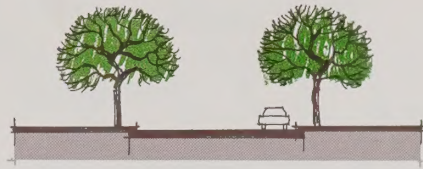


ARTERIAL

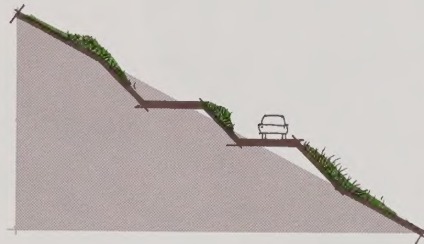


COLLECTOR

1. As suggested earlier (page 15) several new freeways may be needed. If the Route 13 or Route 77 freeways are built, some of the nearby City street improvements may not be needed.



LOCAL STREET



HILLSIDE LOCAL STREET

partial control of access. Adjacent development should be in large units, preferably with access from other streets. Planting should be very large in scale, appropriate to the volume and speed of vehicular traffic.

Arterial. This class would include the other important movement channels between major sections of the city. Traffic speed would be somewhat lower than on boulevards, and planting smaller in scale. Some arterials might have a narrow median strip (not shown in the typical cross-section). Although it is

desirable for adjacent properties to have vehicular access from side streets, one would expect—and will need to design for—heavy curbside and pedestrian use in many sections such as older business districts.

Collector. Collector streets would provide the link between arterials and local streets. They should be so designed that they do not attract large volumes of through traffic. On many collector streets pedestrian traffic is quite important; careful attention must be given to design detail and the walking experience.

Local Street. Local streets would be used primarily for access to abutting property. At this level, the neighborhood and the people that constitute it are more important than vehicles. The individual should feel that this is his domain; the motorist should feel that he is the intruder. A narrow roadway width is suggested both to increase the “intimacy” of the area and to force a reduced speed on the motorist.

Hillside Local Street. Hillside streets need to be more sensitive to the natural topography. When a roadway is cut into a slope, a wide exposed cut-and-fill surface results. The accompanying sketch shows one way to avoid this: a split-level solution illustrating that although the **amount** of cut-and-fill surface may approximate that of a one-level solution, the **visual impact** is lessened because the exposed surface is divided into three smaller sections rather than two larger ones. The cross-section of a hillside street should change as the slope changes. For example, as the natural slope flattens out the roadbeds may come to the same level, permitting turnarounds.

PROPOSED DESIGN HIERARCHY, MAJOR TRAFFICWAYS



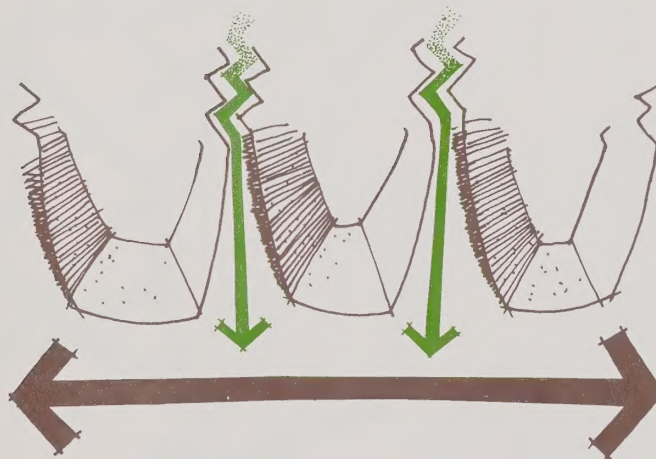
- Boulevard
- Important Arterial
- Freeway

CITY-WIDE STREET DESIGN PLAN

The map on the opposite page suggests a beginning of a city-wide street design plan.

Strongly implied by this map is the concept that a street's visual and functional impact on the surrounding environment must be considered equally with the engineering problem of moving traffic. The subtle relationships between topography, land use, and circulation patterns need to be understood. Street alignments should be chosen which respect, and take advantage of, vistas and natural land form. For example, as the accompanying sketch illustrates, major streets in the hills and foothills should be confined to canyon routes, so that the knolls and crests between are available for housing and free from through traffic.

To help carry out the design plan, a massive program of strategically located planting along important trafficways—with concurrent improvements in luminaires and other street furniture—should be started as soon as possible. This program should include all proposed new streets or street widenings necessary for traffic reasons.



Along these streets, many of which will probably need a median strip, trees could be planted efficiently at the time of construction. In addition, high priority should be given to planting along certain existing streets which, though not requiring widening, are strategically located or offer special opportunities because of particularly wide rights-of-way or unique cross-sections.

The map on the next page suggests important routes where major planting and other design improvements would be especially appropriate.

GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Each street is unique, with its own design constraints and potential, but the design of all major trafficways, and of development along them, should be guided as much as possible by these general principles.

Best results occur when several of these principles work together. The portion of Grand Avenue from Harrison Street to MacArthur Boulevard is a model against which other streets may be judged.

There should be strong contrasts, such as between commercial and residential stretches and between intensively built-up sections and lower-density ones. Mile after mile of the same pattern is deadening.

While contrasts are important, a trafficway should also have some consistent underlying theme; planting, luminaires, street width, or relationship to a ridge, shoreline, or other natural feature could lend consistency to a trafficway.

In most situations the buildings along a street should be high enough (in relation to street width) and continuous enough to create a well defined street channel with some sense of "enclosure." Most of downtown Broadway is an example of good enclosure; East 14th Street beyond 73rd Avenue

PROPOSED MAJOR AVENUE PLANTING
AND DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS



exhibits lack of enclosure. Exceptions can occur where, for example, lack of enclosure is desirable where a view can be opened up. Also, the **degree** of enclosure should vary along a street to create contrasts between different sections.

A trafficway should, where possible, run next to open spaces, or take advantage of interesting topography by following a valley, shoreline, or other feature.

Trafficways should almost always have trees or other significant planting—particularly along trafficways lacking enclosure.

All utility lines and wires should be underground.

LUMINAIRES AND OTHER STREET FURNITURE

Along the typical major street there is a motley, confusing array of street "furniture" of every possible size, shape, and color—luminaires, overhead utility poles and wires, fireplugs, fire alarms, mail boxes, sundry street and traffic signs, and (on commercial streets) private signs and billboards.

A joint committee should be set up with the task of recommending a more up-to-date lightpole design (such as a short-radius davit pole) and a whole range of well designed street furniture, from fireplugs to street signs, with a harmonious vocabulary of forms and colors.

These should, of course, vary between the different kinds of street. Along streets with heavy pedestrian traffic, for example, as on Washington Mall, high luminaires which are oriented to automobiles could be supplemented, with lower lighting fixtures. The decorative old double-headed luminaires still in place along portions of Grand Avenue, Telegraph, and East 14th Street should be preserved.

Along any given street, the light

poles should have uniform design, with height and spacing appropriate to the class of street.

On all streets, the quality of public directional and informational signs needs to be greatly improved. There is today little imagination in these ever-present elements in the street scene. What is needed is the introduction of more good, bold graphics, such as is happening elsewhere in the world. Signs could then become bright, cheerful, **positive** elements of a street.

INTERSECTIONS

Intersections—the "joints" that tie together the street network—not only are critical in determining the traffic capacity, but also have a crucial effect on a street's visual quality and on a driver's ability to find his way through the city. **In Oakland far too many important intersections are congested, cluttered, and confusing.**

The diagonal intersections found continually along San Pablo Avenue, Bancroft and Foothill Boulevards, and other places in Oakland present recurrent problems, but at the same time perhaps the most exciting opportunities for improvement. Many of these situations seem to be begging for development into landscaped plazas. Particularly difficult situations such as the meeting of San Pablo, Grand, and Grove—or of Telegraph and Claremont Avenues, 51st Street, and the Grove-Shafter Freeway—demand bold solutions as total areas.

Throughout the city the major-trafficway network—basically a complex pattern with numerous sharp turns and acute angles—offers many fine building sites at prominent intersections.

Major buildings should be encouraged to locate so that they highlight, and enhance, important intersections. An excellent fulfillment of this principle is the First Congregational Church at 27th and Harrison.

This chapter consists of three urban design studies which apply the general ideas discussed in preceding chapters to specific areas of the city.

These studies illustrate how all the different physical-form elements—residential and nonresidential buildings, open spaces, trafficways—can be related to one another at a smaller, “district” scale. They also suggest a wide variety of specific design proposals, some of which are quite tentative in themselves but all of which should serve as useful examples when urban design studies of other areas are undertaken.

THE GREATER CENTRAL DISTRICT

As suggested earlier, the Central District is in a sense considerably larger than the boundaries covered by the adopted **Oakland Central District Plan**. The extent of the emerging Greater Central District is being determined partly by the topographic amenity of Lake Merritt, the Lake Merritt Channel, and the Estuary, and partly by the accessibility offered by the inner freeway loop soon to be formed by the MacArthur, Grove-Shafter, and Nimitz Freeways.

This whole area has a powerful basic form which could be made to come alive—high-rise buildings, a variety of interesting subareas, and a lake-park complex already superb by any standards.

The physical form of this entire district must be seen as a total, interrelated thing. Planning for the area must consider the subtle visual linkages and distinctions between the different subareas, the downtown skyline as seen from all directions, the relation between water area, hillsides, and building

forms around the Lake, the network of pedestrianways and small open spaces that is so important in providing structure and local interest.

This illustrative study, based on the Central District Plan, partly elaborates on it and partly deals with areas outside the Plan’s boundary. Many of the proposals listed below are drawn from the Central District Plan itself, others from such later, supplementary studies as the Peralta College-Chinatown General Neighborhood Renewal Plan.

1. **Auto Row.** Preservation and strengthening of this, the biggest auto row in the East Bay. Development of multi-level joint storage and customer parking facilities, possibly on the large open site at 30th and Broadway. Some controlled expansion onto side streets. Visual enhancement, with tree planting along Broadway and creation of small plazas opening up views of the interesting churches at 24th and 28th Streets.
2. **Glen Echo Creek.** Visual extension of Glen Echo Park (the only existing City park built exclusively around the circumstance of a creek): up to MacArthur Boulevard on the north through tree planting, and down to 27th Street on the south by means of a pedestrian path which could at least symbolize the location of the now-culverted natural water-route to Lake Merritt. Continued apartment construction along this whole axis.
3. **Waverly High-Density Housing.** Development of a high-density apartment complex—a logical extension of Adams Point—in this area, now a shabby mixture of old houses and commercial services which clearly wastes its splendid lakeside setting.

GREATER CENTRAL DISTRICT:
ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT



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4. **Grand Avenue "Boulevard" Development.** Extension of the character already found along Grand opposite Lakeside Park, westward along West Grand Avenue and possibly down an improved Grove Street. Tree planting and strict zoning controls to ensure an attractive "boulevard" setting for office, motel, and other activities which want direct vehicular access, abundant off-street parking, and prominent "showcase" locations along a wide trafficway. Low over-all intensity of development, with generous use of landscaped open areas.
 5. **Northwest Lakefront.** More intensive use of the lakefront—potentially downtown's finest commercial edge—on both sides of the Kaiser Center. Open terraces and outdoor cafes facing Harrison Street and Border Lake Park, to add visible activity right along this edge.
 6. **Height Controls on Lower Lakefront Land.** Possible five-to-eight-story height limits—perhaps with some exceptions for buildings which pass stringent review criteria—for the lower-elevation properties near the lake-edge, to avoid a "wall" blocking Lake views from behind and, especially, to preserve the view up the Grand Avenue-Lake Shore "valley," toward the distant Oakland Hills, at the Lake's northeast corner. (See accompanying sketches for desirable future skyline.)
 7. **High-Rise Apartments on Upper Slopes.** Encouragement of high-rise apartment construction on the higher portions of Adams Point and Peralta Heights, in order to accentuate the topography and permit Lake views by the largest number of residents. (See accompanying sketches.)





8. **Mid-Core.** Intensification of the weak middle portion of the Core—the section between 16th and 19th Streets. Possible “Telegraph Square” retail-office-hotel redevelopment of the mainly open blocks west of Telegraph Avenue, linked closely to new developments along Broadway. Possible closing of the end of Telegraph, with auto traffic diverted via a new crossover route to Jefferson Street.
9. **San Pablo Gateway.** Possible office development where the future freeway-access streets 17th and 19th will cross the avenue.
10. **Pedestrianways and Small Plazas.** Planned renovation of Broadway from Seventh Street to Grand Avenue, with tree planting and attractively rebuilt sidewalks. Pedestrianways on Ninth, 15th, and other streets: semi-malls with widened sidewalks, or paths cutting through blocks. Small “gathering squares” at various intersections.
11. **City Hall Plaza.** Expansion by closing the end of San Pablo Avenue, and redesign as a true urban, paved open space enlivened by pedestrian movement across its surface.
12. **City Center.** High-intensity, high-rise complex on superblocks created by street closures. Offices, major hotel, retail and restaurant space, parking garages, and pedestrian terraces.
13. **Hotel Oakland Area.** Renovated Hotel Oakland as focus for new development in existing “gray area.” Possible plaza, with parking underneath, facing the Hotel’s south side.
14. **Acorn Project Shopping Center.** Community shopping center for West Oakland, with junior department store, etc. Offices or apartments above stores.

-
15. **Old City Residential Area.** Complex of moderate-and low-cost apartments and town houses on super-blocks created by street closings.
 16. **Victorian Row.** Rehabilitation of fine area of Victorian commercial buildings along and near Ninth Street. Reuse for architects' offices, restaurants, furniture and specialty shops, etc.
 17. **Chinatown Redevelopment.** Rebuilding, in cooperation with the Chinese community, with specialized commercial area, Chinese community facilities, and high-density housing.
 18. **Seventh Street "Boulevard" Development.** Low-intensity offices, motels, etc. — similar to those along West Grand — facing a widened, well planted Seventh Street.
 19. **Civic Center Expansion.** New public (and some private) office buildings in the presently underused area between the Court House and the rapid transit station. Major plaza development to give a focus for the Civic Center, with outdoor restaurants and small shops to add interest. Some high-rise apartments, plus badly needed parking garages.
 20. **Foot of Lake Merritt.** Off-street parking, with a rooftop plaza overlooking Lake. Direct pedestrian overpass to a boat dock and improved walkway at the lake-edge itself. Outdoor cafes. Reactivation of the "Chain of Lights" around the Lake. Possible demolition of the Auditorium, with replacement by a new theater or other cultural facilities.
 21. **Rehabilitation of Industrial Buildings.** Preservation of the fine old loft buildings on lower Franklin Street and side streets near Jack London Square, with some of them reused for offices, restaurants, and elegant wholesale showrooms.
 22. **Jack London Square.** Creation of a sizable true plaza at the foot of Broadway, with most of the open parking replaced by multi-level garages.
 23. **Estuary Residential Area.** New high-density residential area along the waterfront.
 24. **Continuous Estuary-to-Lake Park.** Continuous park and pedestrian-way connection from Jack London Square, through the planned Channel Park at the Estuary-Lake Merritt Channel corner, and along the Channel through the new Laney College campus, to the foot of the Lake. Controlled commercial development along the Estuary: restaurants, commercial recreation, etc.
 25. **Parkway Commercial Area.** Possible rebuilding of the commercial site at the foot of East 18th Street opposite the Lake, with raised terrace, outdoor cafes, and high-rise apartments above. Major tree planting to extend the lakeside's "park" feeling inland along East 18th and Foothill and Park Boulevards.
 26. **Eastlake High-Density Housing.** High-density residential development, including high-rise, in the area just east of the Lake and around the edge of the Laney College campus.
 27. **Clinton Square.** Office and business-service development near Clinton Square. Mexican restaurants and specialty shops facing the plaza itself, which already has a Spanish-language cinema and could become a center for the local Spanish-speaking population.
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GREATER CENTRAL DISTRICT: PROPOSALS



See accompanying text for key numbers.

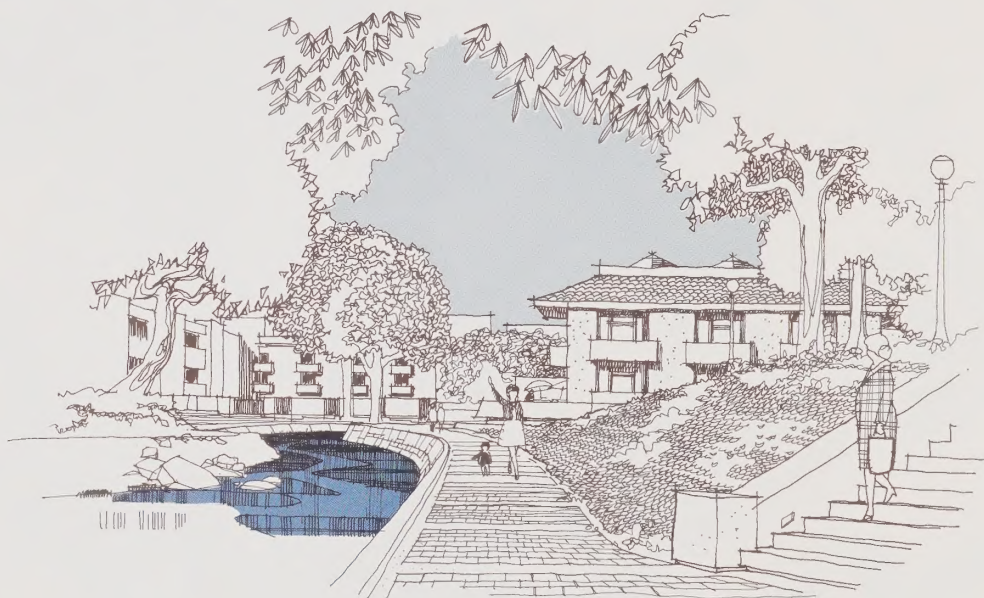
THE GREATER FRUITVALE AREA

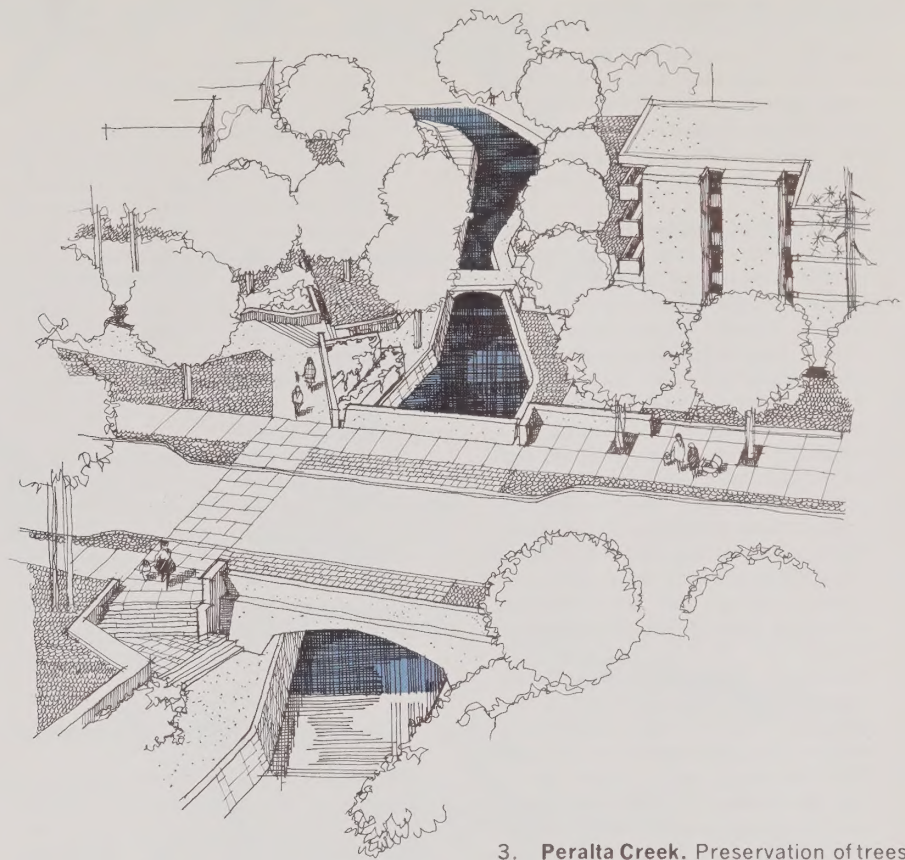
The greater Fruitvale area is in many ways a microcosm of Oakland. Like the city as a whole, it contains: hillsides and flatlands, an interesting but neglected shoreline, wooded creeks, huge factories and tiny corner stores, areas of immaculately maintained homes and areas of ramshackle old dwellings, a major department store and shopping district, schools needing expansion, and neighborhoods without adequate open space.

The accompanying perspective suggests how the Fruitvale area's basic structure could be clarified, public open space and other amenities added, and lively focal points created within what is now an essentially dreary area. In doing this the study tries especially to take maximum advantage of the development opportunities offered by the BART station. Intensive commercial and industrial development should be fostered near the station, while major apartment construction should be encouraged in various parts of the area in locations convenient to bus routes which feed the BART station.

Major proposals include the following.

1. **Sausal Creek.** Creation of a linear park along Sausal Creek, connecting existing Dimond Park, the Dimond community shopping district, and the shopping areas at Foothill Boulevard and East 14th Street. Continuous public creekside walkway (probably requiring some right-of-way widening), with wider park or recreation areas at the presently-City-owned McKillop Road slide area; expanded Hawthorne and Whitton Schools; existing Sanborn Park; and a possible com-





munity civic center (library branch, fire station, etc.) at East 14th. Corridor of garden apartments along the creek and closely-parallel Fruitvale Avenue. The accompanying sketches illustrate desirable apartment development, and how the creek could be related attractively to streets that cross it.

2. **Dimond Community Shopping District.** Intensification of the shopping area. Development of apartments and joint parking facilities behind the main shopping frontages, especially in the southwest portion where they could be integrated with the park development along Sausal Creek.

3. **Peralta Creek.** Preservation of trees and natural creek character. Encouragement of garden apartments which preserve and make use of this character. Creation of major community park just above Foothill, coordinated with needed expansion of Hamilton Junior High School. Interruption, by creekside apartment development, of the commercial strip pattern along both Foothill and MacArthur Boulevards.

-
4. **Foothill Boulevard Shopping District.** Replacement of the present strung-out commercial pattern by a more intensive, clearly delimited neighborhood shopping district bracketed between Sausal and Peralta Creeks. Tree planting along the boulevard to link, visually, the two creeks.
 5. **Modifications of Street Pattern.** Narrowing of curbs and installation of traffic diverters, to create loop streets or cul-de-sacs, at many selected places. Street closures to create bigger buildable apartment sites, especially near the creeks.
 6. **Fruitvale Subregional Center.** Addition of new office, apartment, and retail facilities. Rebuilding of the East 12th Street frontage facing the BART station, with tree planting and one or more attractive plazas. Possible air-rights development above the station parking area. More intensive use of the area between Fruitvale Avenue and Montgomery Ward's.
 7. **Railroad Relocation and Grade Separations.** Abandonment of the Western Pacific Railroad tracks with trains rerouted to closely-parallel Southern Pacific tracks, allowing reorganization of adjacent street and lot patterns and making it easier to build possible grade separations at Fruitvale and/or 29th Avenue.
 8. **East 12th-San Leandro Connection.** Overpass directly linking East 12th and San Leandro Streets, the connection between which is now very confusing and congested.
 9. **New Industrial Development.** Eventual replacement, by new industrial development, of the Kennedy Tract's isolated and badly deteriorated pockets of old housing mixed with shabby industrial buildings. Encouragement of electronics or other firms employing large numbers of people, especially near the BART station.
 10. **Embarcadero.** Continuous "Embarcadero" route for northwest-southeast traffic through the industrial belt. Planting of large trees to mark this important route.
 11. **Twenty-Ninth Avenue "Spine."** Enhancement of 29th Avenue as a spine clearly connecting Ward's, the shoreline, and Alameda's Park Street commercial corridor. Wind-row planting of tall trees to extend, visually, the spine of Sausal Creek and its trees.
 12. **The Waterfront.** Possible apartment and commercial development at 29th Avenue, including the presently underused land between the bridge and Montana Mills. Mini-parks and waterside cafes or small marinas at each of the bridges spanning the Tidal Canal. Shoreline walks in the adjacent sections.

THE TELEGRAPH AVENUE CORRIDOR

Telegraph Avenue—potentially a grand boulevard linking downtown Oakland and the University—is a severe disappointment. It is in fact an undistinguished—and in places shoddy—commercial strip, visually poorer than its surroundings.

The new freeway and rapid-transit construction, however, create an obvious opportunity to attract new development and reinforce Telegraph as a "spine" linking the East Bay's two biggest centers.

The land along Telegraph and the adjacent Grove-Shafter Freeway should

GREATER FRUITVALE AREA: ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT



become a corridor for major new apartment and commercial construction. The sheer size and bulk of the freeway should be softened by appropriate major planting along it and balanced by larger buildings more in sympathy with the freeway's scale than the present little frame houses. Sizable street trees should be planted along the entire length of Telegraph itself (except, perhaps, within the Central District Core). Luminaires and other street furniture should be carefully designed. (The ornate old double-globe light poles below 40th Street should be retained.)

While these measures would strengthen the avenue's **over-all** theme, development along it should also be **differentiated** into identifiable segments and clusters. This will not only make for a more efficient land-use pattern but also provide contrasts and an essential rhythm to the avenue's travel experience.

The major proposals suggested by the illustrative site plan are summarized below.

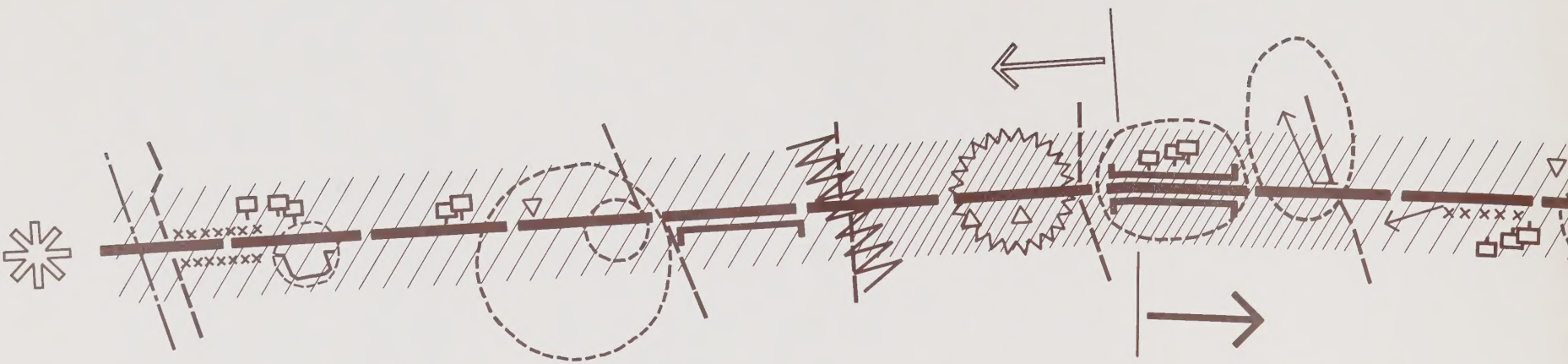
1. **Upper Telegraph.** Southward extension of the office corridor which is now beginning along Telegraph in Berkeley. Most of this presently tawdry section "decommercialized," with uses restricted to residential or residential-plus-office buildings. Possible median strip, made feasible by the street's wide cross-section and the restriction on drive-in commercial development. Major open space introduced by expanding Bushrod Playground right over to the avenue.
2. **Temescal Shopping District.** Intensification of the existing community shopping district, within clearly de-

fined boundaries. Preservation of continuous building frontage along Telegraph. New parking behind the stores, especially along Shattuck. Plaza just below 52nd Street, to serve as a focus for the shopping district and a setting for Italian restaurants or specialty shops. Expansion of Wilson Junior High School's playground to the avenue to clearly mark the shopping district's southern edge.

3. **Temescal Creek.** Preservation, enhancement, and (in places) excavation of Temescal Creek as a major North Oakland cross-axis linking the shopping district (and its plaza) with creekside apartments and schools. Heavy planting to extend the creek, visually, across the freeway.
4. **Apartment and Commercial Sections.** Somewhat lower-intensity development, contrasting with the intervening denser clusters. A series of high-rise apartments, especially in the loop streets between the avenue and the freeway. Possible short-cut pedestrian path along the eastern edge of the freeway to connect the residential loop streets with the BART station. Medium-intensity commercial strip development along Telegraph itself. Section next to Pill Hill as a possible expansion area for medical facilities.
5. **West MacArthur Subregional Center.** Intensive commercial development, primarily offices, clustered around the rapid transit station and extending eastward along West MacArthur Boulevard. Construction of offices, apartments, and a sizable plaza on air rights over the station's

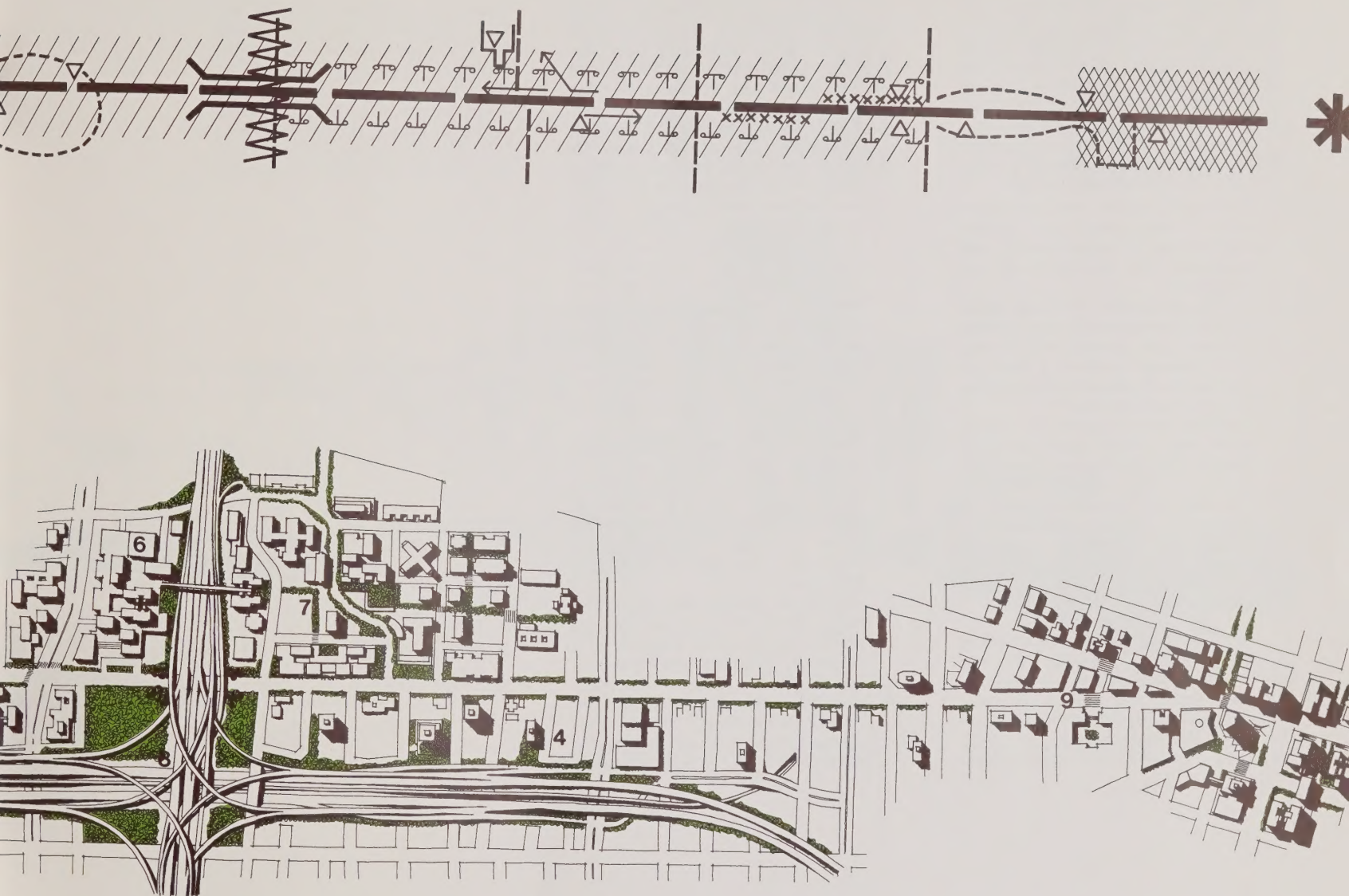
parking garage.

6. **New Medical Center.** Medical and training center on site between Pill Hill and BART station, with excellent regional accessibility and nearness to four major hospitals, allowing observation and practice by students. Possible mechanized connection across the freeway to Pill Hill.
7. **Pill Hill.** Intensified use—with expansion of existing hospitals plus addition of new, related facilities—as suggested in the City's **Medical Center Hill Plan**. Jointly financed parking garages, terraced into the sides of the hill and tied in with a system of small plazas and walkways. Siting of buildings so as to create more visual openings to Telegraph and Broadway.
8. **Freeway Interchange Park.** Creation of an innovative park and recreation area in the dramatic area at the four-level Grove-Shafter/MacArthur Freeway interchange, using the surplus State-owned properties plus a few additions. Major planting to match the scale of the great, soaring ramps.
9. **Central District Core.** Sharp change in building scale just below Grand Avenue, to mark Telegraph's entrance into the Core. For the remaining few blocks down to Broadway, continuous ground-floor retail frontage along this, the most important shopping street in Oakland. Small plazas leading off Telegraph. Strong orientation to pedestrian movement, with the possibility of diverting all vehicular traffic from the lower end of the avenue.



See accompanying text for key numbers.

TELEGRAPH AVENUE CORRIDOR:
ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT



This study was based on the premise that "urban design" is an on-going function and that, to be meaningful, the efforts of urban designers must be an integral part of the comprehensive planning process. Short-range decisions, as well as long-range ones, which affect the physical environment should involve urban designers. It is necessary that urban design be integrated from the beginning with "all elements of the planning process, in such a manner as to assure adaptability to the variables in urban growth and change."¹

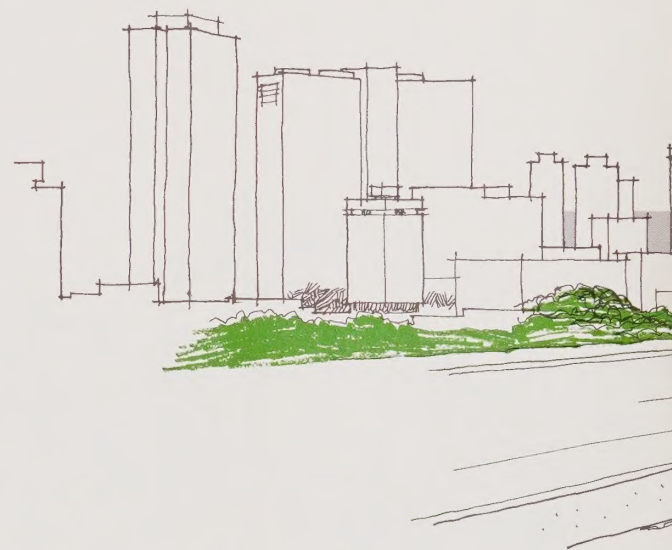
In addition to its role in the preparation of a comprehensive plan, other functions of urban design include:

1. continuing survey and identification of visual and other sensory characteristics, opportunities, and problems in the physical environment;
2. explicit articulation of design objectives and design-evaluation criteria;
3. analysis and illustration (making them visually explicit) of the consequences of development proposals, public or private;
4. development of standards, incentives, and control techniques to achieve the qualitative values implicit in urban design proposals;
5. provision of illustrative graphics, diagrams, models, verbal statements, and other media capable of engaging all levels of the community in the choice of options relating to physical form.

In order to properly perform these functions and help actually carry out the urban design policies and proposals contained in this report, appropriately trained staff should be added to the City Planning Department. They might be organized into a new Environ-

mental Design Division. Initially, such a division could undertake the following tasks.

1. **A report to the Director of City Planning listing those activities, of not only the City Planning Department but also of all other City agencies, which affect the visual quality of the city.** The report should outline ways in which the City Planning Department might influence the quality of City design-work either directly or indirectly.
2. **Refinement of portions of the Comprehensive Plan through more detailed design studies, especially in those areas identified by this study as "areas of major change."** These would be similar to the staff study of the Fruitvale/Sausal Creek area described in this report in which suggestions were made for such things as apartment sites, school expansion, major tree masses, and creek preservation. Other elements might include such things as precise zoning maps, locations for high buildings, and illustrative designs for public open spaces.
3. **Preparation of large-scale design proposals, such as for Pill Hill or the Coliseum-Eastmont axis along 73rd Avenue.** This type of positive effort could serve to inspire and guide the work of planners and designers, as well as to attract developers.
4. **Review of development plans for large-scale commercial developments and housing projects of a planned-unit-development nature** (presently a function of the Planning Administration Division). The Environmental Design Division staff could develop design criteria to guide the City Planning Commission



1. This quotation and list are based on a draft American Institute of Planners Policy Statement on Urban Design by the AIP Urban Design Committee, March 1967.

in project review, and publish criteria and guidelines to furnish to interested developers. This review should also include major projects of other public agencies, such as street widenings and school expansions.

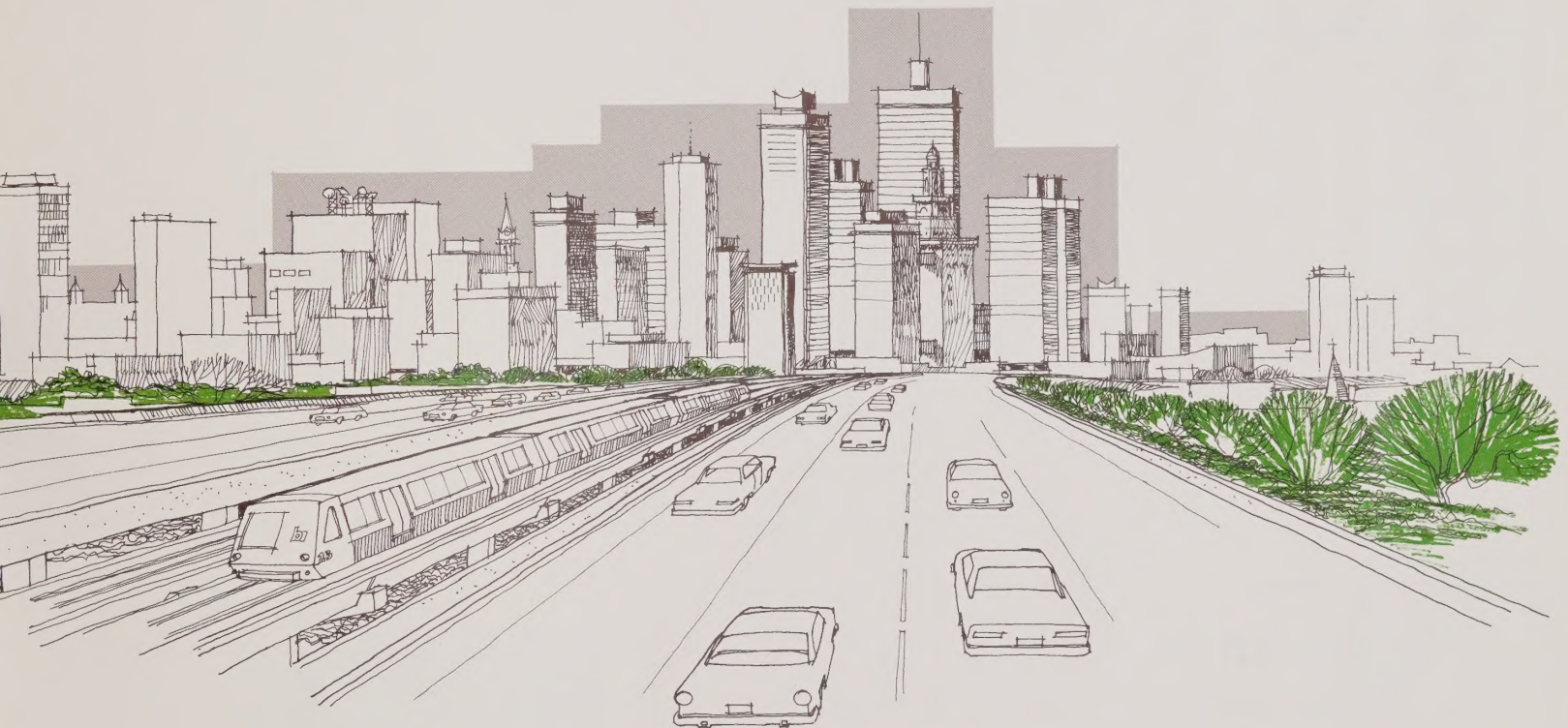
5. **Carrying the message that good design is to the advantage of all concerned**, perhaps the most important task. Illustrative materials could be developed and made available through loan or by direct presentation to all school grades, business and social clubs and organizations, City departments and

officials, neighborhood groups, and individual citizens. The effects of good public-relations programs, such as those in Philadelphia and Boston, are immeasurable.

A group such as the Oakland Urban Design Committee mentioned at the beginning of this report should function as a permanent committee advisory to the City Planning Department. It could advise, stimulate, and assist the Department in all the functions listed above, especially the last one. Some of its own functions should be independent as well. It might, for example,

raise funds for environmental-design exhibits—a three-dimensional model of the city, for example—and encourage a design-awards program, under the auspices of the Mayor, for good Oakland projects.

Throughout this report it has been stressed how Oakland, despite its splendid natural setting, has failed to develop any strong image ("there is no there there"). This has been the result of decisions—both by private land developers and City policy-makers—which ignored the physical environment. "Urban design" must be introduced into the decision-making process.



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POVERTY TARGET AREAS

- A. NORTH OAKLAND
- B. WEST OAKLAND
- C. FRUITVALE
- D. EAST OAKLAND
- E. THE HILLS
- F. SOUTH CENTRAL OAKLAND
- G. NORTH CENTRAL OAKLAND

OTHER HOUSEHOLD AREAS

LEGEND

- A** ——— HOUSEHOLD AREAS
- 20** RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- 61** 1960 CENSUS TRACTS

CITY PLANNING DEPT. OAKLAND CALIF.

CITY PLANNING DEPT.
OAKLAND CALIF.

